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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There are various definitions of philosophy and its aims and functions. We shall notice some of them here:

(1) Philosophy lays down the grounds of our beliefs.

(2) It investigates things and our experiences of them to discover one unitive reality, if any, behind the apparent plurality presented to the senses and to describe its nature.

(3) It tries to know whether the world as a whole has a purpose and end towards which it is moving by the laws of its own nature.

(4) It tries to know if there is an end or purpose whether there is any intelligent power that created the world with that predetermined aim. If there were such an aim, what is its nature?

(5) In a world such as man finds himself in, the place of man and the values that constitute the goal of his life is examined by philosophy.

(6) If there are values of the mind that are contemplated, the ways in which life should be organised are spelt out by philosophy.

(7) Philosophy is not merely to lay down the goals and methods of living; it is living itself.

(8) Philosophy is to know oneself.

(9) Philosophy investigates the sources and instruments of knowledge as a prelude to understanding the nature of the thing known, determining the nature, scope and limits of human understanding.

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(10) Philosophy is to analyse the conclusions of the sciences and try to construct a comprehensive structure of the knowledge of the world and man's life in it.

(11) Philosophy has the sole function of linguistic analysis of the scientific statements to bring about clarity in them. Its aim is not to discover facts but one of therapeutic correction of the language of science.

(12) Philosophy gives an integrated wisdom by an analysis of experience.

(13) Philosophy gives an intuited wisdom by an insight which is not intellectual but spiritual.

Pythagoras divided men into three types with games as model. The players participate in the game and show their mettle. Others organise the game and get an income. The third variety are those people who come and watch the game without an active commitment. Pythagoras compared these people to philosophers.

In India, philosophy is termed as *tattva* which literally means the nature of that which is. The investigation of that reality also is called *tattva*. *Tirukkuraḷ*, for example, says that wisdom is that which sees the reality in whichever object of whatever nature.[1] Philosophical investigation is not merely a barren intellectual enterprise but is an art of getting face to face with reality. It is 'seeing through' the multiplicity a unity which

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1. எப்பொருள் எத்தன்மைத்தாயினும் அப்பொருள்
மெய்ப்பொருள் காண்பதறிவு. (355)

Tiruvaḷḷuvar calls ultimate reality as that which alone truly exists: (மெய்ப்பொருள்). It is also called "that which is" (உள்ளது). Truth (உண்மை) is so called because it tells us what is real. Hence, philosophy includes a metaphysics of reality and is called *tattva-darśana*. The word '*Poruḷ*' indicates that which is concealed by ignorance and revealed by knowledge. See *Tolkāppia Neṟi* by Dr. M. A. Doraiarangaswami, I Edn 1963:; p. 34.

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interpenetrates and informs it. Such a direct vision of truth is alone entitled to the title of knowledge; all else is, as Plato would have said, merely opinion which is of the order of the sensible. *Tirukkuraḷ* avers that what is sensible falls short of the real which is not at once evident to the uncritical eye. Reality is immediately felt by a direct vision. The immediacy that characterises sense-perception is only nominal. Strictly speaking, it is also mediate because it does not arise unmixed with judgements and interpretations of the mind. No "brute fact" as such is ever perceived.[2] Otherwise illusions and errors will never happen. Sense-experience, therefore, settles itself down merely to the level of opinion. Practically it is false because it does not disclose the reality as much as it conceals it, though it provides the occasion to demand the truth and find it. As Kant would say, our knowledge starts with experience but does not originate from it. The empiricists who hold that all knowledge originates from sense-experience and the rationalists who argue that all knowledge originates from the mind are right in what they affirm but are wrong in what they deny. Sensory experience is the starting-point for any inquiry, though such an inquiry discloses the insufficiencies of the knowledge provided by sense-experience alone.

Tirukkuraḷ has more than once warned us against trusting the reports of the senses. Senses do mislead us very often. The impermanent is mistaken by the undiscerning mind to be permanent, for instance.[3] This is the height of unregenerate common-sense that thinks that things are as they appear. The pure in mind who control their senses are able to see clearly without distorting the truth.[4]

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2. B. Russell, for instance, believed that the only thing of which we are directly aware is the sense-datum and the 'I' that is so aware. For the rest of it, we infer the so-called physical objects.

3. நில்லாதனவற்றை நிலையின என்றுணரும்
புல்லறிவாண்மை கடை. *(331)*

4. *Kuraḷ*: 174 and 199, to wit.

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It is this distortion that is responsible for the views which believe that nothing exists that is unperceived or is imperceptible. Truth is misperceived here as in the case of the shell being mistaken for silver. Parimelalagar thinks that there is a primordial ignorance which brings about the distortions which is universal and *a priori.* The objectivity of the world of common sense is traceable to this *a priori* conditioning of all minds. The sense-experiences thus share a public world for all practical purposes. When an illusion is common to all, there is no sublating circumstance and hence the illusion itself becomes the reality. Plato's simile of the cave tells us of the man who takes the shadows to be the substance for the simple reason that he has no opportunity to see the substance and the source. Bertrand Russell once said that a dream from which there is no awakening will be reality. An illusion is known to be one only where there is a state of affairs that cancels it and is an other to it.[5]

This distorting ignorance is compared to darkness.[6] In darkness, the real is not seen and in its place somethingelse is cognised. In all error, there are the two factors of non-apprehension and misapprehension. True knowledge is free from these corruptions and is the state of unexcelled bliss. The goal of life is fulfilment and perfection brought about by true knowledge which is direct and blemishless vision : (மாசறு காட்சி). It dispels all doubts and dialectical difficulties, just as when an illusion is cancelled on the dawn of truth, there are no more doubts left.

Tirukkuraḷ tells us that name, class and form are the various expressions of one and the same reality. Parimelalagar explains it thus: The same being is described as a king as of a class, as belonging to a clan, as having a certain figure, and is called

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5. *Kuraḷ* : 351 and Parimelalagar's commentary on it. See also *Manimekhlai* :

திரிவாக்கோட லொன்றை யொன்றென்றல்
விரிகதிரிப்பியை வெள்ளியென்றுன்னல்
... ...
ஓராது தறியை மகனெனவுணர்தல்.

6. It is called "இருள்" and "பேதைமை". See 358.

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by diverse names accordingly. Yet as a person he is the same individual identical with himself.[7] That the effects are not different from the cause can be shown by the fact that they can be resolved in their respective causes. From the gross to the subtle, and subtler still, all effects will in the ultimate analysis resolve in the fundamental cause. When this happens, there will be no cause and no effect to talk about.

That a persistent inquiry will lead to the disclosure of truth which is the reality (உள்ளது) is stated by the *Kuraḷ*.[8] Study and reflection are essential for a philosophical knowledge of truth and a liberating wisdom which is the cessation of all becoming.[9] Ultimately becoming is tracked down to ignorance (பேதைமை) which is the tendency to believe in the plurality of the physical presentations and to miss the central unity which is the sustaining source of them all. This darkness is a disvalue while the reality is the supreme goal of human endeavour and thus constitutes the greatest value (செம்பொருள், சிறப்பு). Parimelaḷagar states the method by which this goal can be reached by the dispelling of darkness. (1) The practice of the right actions which include the performance of one's own duties whereby one's evil propensities get minimised and gradually nullified. (2) On this, ignorance is neutralised. (3) On this, a discriminative intelligence emerges to sift the permanent from the ephemeral. (4) On this, dispassion towards pleasures and awareness of the painful character of things develop. (5) This gives birth to a desire to realize the supreme value of unexcelled bliss from which there is no return. (6) Consequently, the person turns his exertions (of study, reflection and contemplation) towards this supreme value. (7) The result will be the realization of the truth (மெய்யுணர்வு). (8) Then, the sense of 'I' and "mine" will drop away. (9) There is liberation and beatitude.

Philosophy has to raise and answer certain questions such as the following: Change is universal. Nothing remains the same

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7. 355.
8. 356; 357.
9. தலைப்படுவர் மற்றீண்டு வாராநெறி. (356). See also 358.

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for any two moments together. The living beings grow and decay at a perceptibly faster rate than the physical objects. And there are things that are relatively more permanent than the others. An intelligent observer cannot fail to notice this irrevocable phenomenon and wonder whether there is anything that is permanent at the back of the entire flux. Time itself is the basic movement in which everything else takes place. Is there a timeless reality which is the matrix of time? Or is it that time and movement are the only realities?

Again, everything that happens has a cause. Universal causation is a fact of nature. Accident is only an expression of ignorance. If there could be a causeless event, anarchy is the only alternative. There will be no nature to speak of. Everything will end in chaos. Life and knowledge will be impossible. Hence, specific causes for specific events must be and are, by practical wisdom, accepted. Similarly, nature as a whole must have a cause and a source. Not to admit this will amount to denying the universal law of causation. If such a cause is admitted, the question arises as to its nature, its relation to the world and man.

Moreover, is the world really as it appears to the senses? Do the senses report the events in the world as they really happen? Occasionally, what is sensed turns out to be vastly different from or even contrary to what is the case. The poignancy of the situation is that one does not notice the error at the time it arises. It is very difficult to say what sensory report is veridical. Hence, the claim the things are as they are sensed becomes suspect. It is thus necessary to investigate and ascertain by specially devised tests the sensory evidence. When *this is done*, the objects by the senses are far different from what they were shown to be by the senses. The world that science reveals has no recognizable relation to the sensory presentations. The world on investigation shows the electrical energies as the basic constituents without colour, taste, smell, sound or touch. What is more, these basic charges are of such infinitesimal magnitudes that a mountain is reducible to a handful of these quantities. The mountain is for the large part empty space. A featureless world of electro-

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magnetic waves is presented by our senses as full of colour, smell, taste and touch. One may wonder whether it is not the senses that create this picturesque world. The whole panorama might after all be a subjective vision.[10]

Even among the realists who hold that the objects are as we perceive them there seems to be no unanimity of views. Some of the New Realists like B. Russell say that what exist are only the neutral particulars which arrange themselves into mind on the one hand and matter on the other. While realism tried to deanthropomorphise, it also unwittingly created a weird world of neutral particulars which are not what realism started with asserting and which are the least like what our ordinary perceptions reveal.

Anyway, the world is not what we see and think on that basis it is. An elaborate analysis and conceptual distinctions are needed even to prove the realist stand.

Now, if there were a cause or source for the world, what is its nature or defining characteristic? Is it material or an intelligent principle? Materialists of both India and the West agree that matter is the ultimate reality and everything is its transformation. They deny all supernatural or supersensible entities. Everything is worked by mechanical laws. Even thought loses its mystery. Brain secretes thought just as the liver secretes bile, argued the

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10. Ernst Cassirer thought that physics does not give us reality. It is creative and symbolic, and tends towards an ideal abstract system. Science itself is construction, saved from arbitrary subjectivity by its rationality and orderliness. Einstein's theory of relativity showed that simultaneity of events can never be determined with absolute certainty. Heisenberg's principle of uncertainty undermined classical determinism in the case of sub-atomic processes, Sir Arthur Eddington holds that we are directly aware of only the contents of our own consciousness. Operational definition of physical concepts is an appeal to the contents of consciousness. Hence, knowledge of the world is knowledge of spirit, consciousness. Physics merely symbolises it and its pointer-readings are at best subjective. Quite a few scientists like H. Dingle and P. W. Bridgman make out that science is the correlation of experiences and that all knowledge is relative.

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eighteenth century German materialists like L. Büchner.[11] Frogs whose brains had been removed still continued to perform purposeful actions and this showed experimentally that all purposeful actions might be automatic or reflex reactions to stimuli. "A frog with half a brain has destroyed more theology than all the doctors of the Church with their whole brains could build up again".

That the world is the creation of an intelligent principle is the contention of the theistic idealists. Several arguments have been adduced to prove the existence of such an intelligent principle:

1. Everything must have its cause and an explanation. The world needs such a cause and an explanation as cannot be given from within itself. It looks to something beyond itself.

2. The world is at best only a contingent fact which need not have been at all or might have been quite otherwise than what it actually is. There is no necessity in the happenings of the world. That the sun rises in the east is not a necessary law but only an empirical fact If it rose in the west, it will not be contradictory to the nature of the world and hence is not inconceivable. But, a square cannot be a triangle without involving a self-contradiction and it is inconceivable. There is a necessity present in this case as in every other analytic proposition.

But everything cannot be contingent without there being something that has a necessary being. Such a necessary being is God. His existence cannot even be considered in thought. Without a necessary being, nothing could have had even a contingent being which the world has.

3. The world discloses an intelligent structure. It is not a shapeless mass of unrelated facts. There is found an orderliness in it which can be described in terms of laws. If it were a

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11. Sometimes it is put in a slightly different way. Thought is phosphorus, the soul complex nerves and our moral sense a secretion of sugar. Feuerbach is known for his "medical materialism" which says that man is what he eats.

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chaos, human mind would not be able even to comprehend it, Such an order and organization must, it would appear, presuppose an author or an architect.

(4) God is not merely an intellectual possibility but a concrete necessity. God, if there is one, must be the most perfect being. If this were true, God must exist, not merely in mind, but also in fact. Otherwise, a God who existed in fact would be greater than the one who is merely a concept and who, therefore, would have admitted a being higher and more perfect than himself, which situation would nullify his godhood. Hence, God is not merely a concept but also a necessary fact.

(5) Man as a morally responsible agent must reap the consequences of his actions. His situations in life may not be accounted for by the actions that he does in one present life. It may be necessary, therefore, to trace his predicament to actions done in earlier births, as Indian religions believe. But actions, it is argued, are not capable to register the appropriate results through many births, nor even in present life because they do not possess the necessary intelligence to do this. Distribution of justice involves a proper adjudication of acts. Hence, a God as the dispenser of moral retribution and recompense should exist.

(6) Miracles constitute a proof for the existence of God.

(7) Mystic experience confirms the existence of God, not as a theory but as a fact.

There are, however, certain serious difficulties in the above arguments. In the first of these arguments which is one way of formulating the cosmological argument, the snag is that the search for cause is abandoned in the case of God rather arbitrarily. A principle that was thought to be unexceptionable is at once compromised.

Similarly the second argument which is yet another way of formulating the cosmological argument and the fourth which is called the ontological argument are susceptible to the objection *inter alia*, that necessity belongs to the propositions and not to existent facts, that existence is not one predicate among predicates,

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that a perfect thing conceivable need not exist except in imagination, that if existence is a predicate of God in an empirical sense, then it is no more a necessary proposition but can be contradicted.

The third one which is a form of teleological argument or argument from design has the flaw of making a metaphysical claim. It is in the nature of the case impossible to know the world as a whole in all the past, present and the future and to say what the purpose the design is calculated to fulfill. The argument from the intelligible structure of the world has at best a methodological value of inducing physical research. The proof is at best analgoical and does not have the demonstrative power.

More than all these, a serious problem arises in the area of moral responsibility. The moral argument, which is the fifth one mentioned above, seems to collapse hopelessly in the teeth of the contention that if God were to be omniscient and omnipotent, as he ought to, then, the freedom of action is taken away from man and he is no more responsible for what he does. It entails the disastrous conclusion that God is responsible, not man, for all that is good and all that is bad in the world. If the bad is to be the work of God, it militates against his grace. If man does bad actions in transgression of God's will, it will be a negation of God's omnipotence. God's foreknowledge of events renders any such free act on the part of man impossible.

It may not be out of place here to add that materialism goes hand in hand with a mechanistic interpretation of the world. The world functions like a soulless machine whose system can be constructed by a few laws of mechanics. W. K. Clifford, in his lectures "*On Theories of Physical Forces*"[11] pointed out that questions like "why do things happen?" are interrogative only in form but are not genuine questions wanting an answer. The proper question to ask is: What precisely *does* happen?" And nothing whatever lies beyond the reach of science which classifies and reasons about them. When metaphysicians talk of purpose or goal, they just indulge in poetry and fantasy which are

11. Delivered in 1870.

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cognitively meaningless. In the world there are only forces which are correlated with one another. Everything happens only on the basis of mechanical laws. Intelligence, for example, can appear and function only in the physical body. Body can exist without the mind but mind cannot exist without the body. Intelligence and consciousness can be shown to be the work of a vastly complicated nervous system which can be described in the language of mechanistic physics. Thoughts are predictable as much as physical facts. In fact thought is low speech and speech is loud thought. Consciousness itself as well as objects are, William James said, diverse emphases of one spiritual self which is pure experience. Knowing thus can be explained as a particular sort of relation into which portions of pure experience may enter. R. B. Perry tried to show that mind is an interested response by an organism and that consciousness of an object is simply the nervous system being "interested" in that object. Apart from this there is no entity called "consciousness", not even in the form of a mental fact. Even errors and illusions belong to this "all-inclusive universe of being" said E. B. Holt. Neurath's physicalism led him to the behaviourist elimination of the 'I' of the subjectivist epistemology. All experiences can be expressed in the language of physics by reference to processes in space and time. As such there is no spiritual science as against natural sciences. The world is expressible, therefore, purely and totally in terms of natural sciences and for that matter, we may add, of mechanistic laws with nothing that is not physical.[12]

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12. In another direction, logical positivism developed into linguistic phenomenalism. Statement about material objects can be, said A. J. Ayer, translated into sentences which refer exclusively to sense-data. Like consciousness, the material object also was ruthlessly eliminated by the positivists. We seem to be left only with the "laws", with nothing that the laws are about. This is the mechanistic interpretation of the world with a vengeance.

    In one way or another the unwillingness to accept anything that is not verifiable, either in practice or in theory, strongly or weakly, in terms of sensory experience has strengthened the movements against metaphysics and in favour of mechanist or naturalist or positivist approach to the world.

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CHAPTER II

METAPHYSICS OF PURANĀNŪRU

We shall now turn to *Puranānūru* to see what it has to say on the metaphysical problems outlined so far in the introduction. We shall take up the element of materialism which is a naturalistic antimetaphysical stance for consideration.

There were protests, at the age of *Puranānūru* against beliefs of the supersensible metaphysical variety. There were dissenters against a life of penance and moral principles that were thought to lead to a heavenly bliss or an eternal beatitude from which there was no return.[1] Obviously, there were people who could accept only things that were demonstrable in sense-experience. The case in point took place when Kopperun Cholan, a chieftain, for some reason decided to immolate himself by squatting to death facing the north. This type of sacramental death is hard to accomplish and its reward is heaven or eternal release. On hearing this, there were comments by a section of people who gathered round him and who thought that all that was stupid tomfoolery, cock and bull story. They believed that the chieftain was undertaking a senseless ritual. Heaven was a myth, a childish bed-time tale; release was sheer wishful thinking of a feverish imagination run away from reality into fantasy. They thought that Kopperun Cholan had gone crazy and was throwing away his life falling a victim to superstition and ignorance. It was then that Kopperun Cholan addressed them. People who ridiculed the penance of immolation and who scoffed at the doctrine of moral retribution have, he admonished, a corrupt heart and a muddled head. He said that one who hunted for an elephant would get an elephant and one who hunted for small bird would return disappointed.[2] He propounded on this model

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1. *Tirukkuraḷ* called this "மற்றீண்டு வாரா நெறி".
2. As *Kuraḷ* puts it:
   செயற்கரிய செய்வார் பெரியர் சிறியர்
   செயற்கரிய செய்கலாதார். (26)

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the principle that those who set their minds on great and glorious goals will be rewarded with rich dividends while those who aimed low will reap paltry returns. He went on to say that the ritualistic death would bring him undying fame.[3]

The implication of the argument cannot be missed. The question is not so much whether there are places like heaven and whether they could be obtained by means of self-immolation as one of living, and dying if necessary, for certain high principles that one considers right. One should be prepared to throw away even one's own life for an ideal. A life of the senses will be the very negation of this lofty idealism and a culture is built not on the quicksands of sensory satisfactions with immediate effect but on the bedrock of great ideals and distant goals. Materialism is the philosophy of a sensate culture, whose base is crudely physical that is of an immediate concern. In an ideal society, the body, to be sure, is a necessity but not sufficient. Body subserves the ends of the spirit which has a life of its own beyond the set limits of the body. Spiritual power, not the brute force, has been the architect of mighty adventures of man, in art and literature, science and technology, religion and philosophy. A live and developing society is governed by ideals and values. A decadent people is marked by the sensual. It hardly sees beyond its nose and soon perishes of a fatal myopia of the immediately pleasant, losing sight of larger perspectives and more enduring goods. Rise and fall of civilizations have been brought about by striving for goals and satisfied leisure respectively.[4] No society which rests on its ores has a

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3. *Puram* : 214.

4. See *Kuraḷ* : 165. Parimelaḷagar declares that a free man is one who controls himself. Only such as he are fit to be leaders of society. They build a nation and take it to the heights of glory. A disciplined people alone set the tone to civilization. See his commentary, *Kuraḷ* : 268. தன்னுயிர் தானறப் பெற்றானை ஏனைய மன்னுயிரெல்லாம் தொழும்.

Such leaders are few and far between. They are hard to find because the path to enlightened leadership is a deep ascent. The path of decadence is easy. Its deceptive lure destroys many.

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future. Unrealized possibilities stir a live society into purposeful action. Dissatisfaction with what is is the spur to effort while people who have no goals tend to fall into the dull routine of sensuality and materialism. The inclination is to enjoy the thrills of pleasure which saps the vital powers of creative energy. A certain indifference to the delights of the senses which a materialist philosophy would inevitably entail is a necessary discipline to scale great heights of culture and civilization. The paradox of materialism is that it enervates even the powers to enjoy its fruits. It takes away by the left what it gives with the right.[5]

Parimelaḷagar in his commentary on the *Kuraḷ*[6] tells us that easy morals are the blind obedience to the claim of the senses. According to him. those who swim against the current of natural inclinations are the exceptional souls who treat life as a long discipline.[7]

Puranānūru repeatedly repudiates materialism and egoistic hedonism, and so do, we may add, *Tirukkuraḷ* and other Tamil

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5. *Cf: Kaṭhopaniṣad* puts the matter beautifully. Naciketas repels the fortunes of wealth and pleasure that the God of Death offers to tempt him away from his determination to get the liberating wisdom. The luxuries that the God of Death promises are poisonous and will corrode and corrupt the man, ultimately leading him into the doom of death. The very boon of the God turns out to be a curse in disguise. See *Kuraḷ* also : 341.
6. See *Kuraḷ* : 26, 27.
7. The eightfold discipline of Yoga consists of cardinal virtues and categorical imperatives admitting of no exception like injuring none, speaking the truth, taking the possession of none, continence and receiving nothing. These are essentially social virtues and values which *Kuraḷ* deals exhaustively with as in themes like கொல்லாமை (not killing). The commentators on *Tolkāppiyam* put it thus:
   பொய், கொலை, களவே, காமம், பொருணசை இவ்வகையைந்தும் அடக்கியது இயமம்.
   A life of discipline, far from being world-negating, is the only way to live a full life here and now. Life is an opportunity and may not be given twice. If one wants to prolong it, the only way to do so is to bring it under discipline and, therefore. free it from bondage to senses. A city's walls are shaken when its people pursue pleasure. *Cf*: *Kuraḷ* : 342,

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works of hallowed antiquity. Let us see how *Puranānūru* proceeds to do this. There is no doubt that the poet-philosophers of *Puranānūru* had definite ideas on the distinction and separateness of body and soul, rebirth, emancipation, values and ways of life, God as the source of the world, the methods of knowing other than perception. It is thus abundantly clear that the culture that *Puranānūru* depicts is anything but materialistic or hedonistic.

THE CONCEPT OF THE SOUL

That the soul is not exhausted by the bodily complex but survives it is a belief strongly held at those times. That the body is not the soul is not perhaps arrived at by a reasoned analysis. Yet the conclusion and the conviction seem to be firm:

The soul while living in the body performs actions for which it is responsible and the consequences of which it has to reap whether it wants it or no. That the soul is a free agent with a will of its own is entailed in the assignment of moral responsibility which is meaningless without freedom. While moral indeterminism is not given any quarters, a mechanical determination of fatalism was far from being contemplated. Actions do bring their results but it is the moral agent who initiates them and is accordingly free. Though the past is irrevocable, the future is yet open with possibilities. Man is the architect of his own destiny, not providence or fate. Accidentalism and indeterminism in morals are as much disastrous as they are in physical sciences. At any rate, *Puranānūru* does not countenance them.[8]

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8. *Kural* puts it in the section on ஊழ் (ool) very effectively. The past actions, when they begin to yield their results, will do so incorrigibly irrespective of all other circumstances. One who has deserved prosperity by his own past actions will reap it at the proper time even though he does not put in any effort and does not have the needed energy and intelligence. The very effort or the lack of it of a person is the result of his own actions. Otherwise it is inexplicable how those who are highly intelligent suffer poverty and privation while the dull-witted roll in wealth. Things are made or unmade by the impelling power of the initiated actions. Unwanted things

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In the *Tolkāppiam*, scholars and commentators believe, interesting thoughts on the nature of the soul have been embodied. Tamil letters have been classified into *Uyir* (soul) and *Mey* (body). They are ordinarily vowels and consonants in linguistic parlance. They stand to each other in the relation of body and soul. There are twelve such 'soul'-letters; strictly speaking, there is only one 'soul' - letter and that is '*a*' (அ) When this letter combines with the other 'soul'-letters and the 'body'-letters it assumes a variety of forms. Naccinārkkiniyar says that the one soul appears diversely according to the nature of the bodies.

The letter '*a*' again is the soul of all the rest of the eleven 'soul'-letters, just as God is the soul of souls. Naccinārkkiniyar quotes the *Bhagavad-gītā*: "I am the letter 'a' in all the letters" and the *Kuraḷ*: "All letters have 'a' as their source". Thus there are letters of which the letter 'a' is the substance and there are bodies in which the letter '*a*' appears variously. It is one and appears variously. (அகரமும் உயிர்க்கண்ணும் கலந்து அவற்றின் தன்மையாயே நிற்கும். அதுபோல இறைவனாகிய முதலையுடைத்து உலகம்).

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pour in and wanted things slip away inspite of the best efforts. *Kuraḷ* speaks of the One (God) who distributes the deserts to the deserving (வகுத்தான்). That is a high intelligence which fixes the responsibility on the right person at the right time in the right proportion (371–380). This can be taken as the moral argument for the existence of God in the *Kuraḷ*.

Tolkāppiam says that God is the dispenser of justice (பால்வரை தெய்வம்).

Tolkāppiar says that God is free from the bondage of actions. This shows that the supreme condition of felicity is one of freedom, whether of God or of man. (வினையின் நீங்கி விளங்கிய அறிவு). In the *Sūtra* 57 of the *Solladhikāram*, Tolkāppiar says, according to commentator Senāvariar, that the human beings should know the nature of time, experience the results of past deeds without likes and dislikes, think of God, practise the good, purify the mind by knowledge and get *redeemed*. Again, one should bear the inevitable without demur and should strive for *perfection* with equanimity· (see on *Poruḷadhikāram*: *Karpu*: 54).

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Tolkāppiam says that even when the 'soul'-letter (vowel) combines with the 'body'-letter (consonant) and appears variously, it does not lose its identity (மெய்யோடியையினும் உயிரியல் திரியா). It changes without changing. We will not be far wrong when we say that its multiple form is more an apparent presentation than real. Even with regard to the other eleven 'soul'-letters, '*a*' pervades them, says Naccinārkiniar, as it pervades the 'body'-letters.

மெய்க்கண் அகரம் கலந்து நிற்குமாறு கூறினாற்போலப் பதினோருயிர்க்கண்ணும் அகரம் கலந்து நிற்கும்

Thus we seem to have three realities: God, soul and the world wherein God is the primary source pervading as the self of the world of souls and of matter.

Tolkāppiam provides us with a concept of man in his essential nature. The *Solladhikāram* commences with the definition of man.[9] On the ground of the qualities that distinguish man from other things the world is categorised into man and non-man. The differentia of man is his discriminating intelligenee,[10] by which the right and the wrong are analysed and discerned, the goal of life is determined and the conduct is attuned for realization of the *summum bonum*. Those who have a human *form* are not classified as man if they lack this power of intellignence and exercise of will towards perfection. The utterances of wise people are authoritative guide to life and its conduct. They constitute the conscience of mankind.[11]

It is the function of a soul to find its fulfilment in life by purifying itself. Such a cleansing is not only possible but also

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9. உயர்திணை என்மனார் மக்கட்சுட்டே.

10. மக்கள்தாமே ஆறறிவுயிரே.

Cp. Śaṅkara' a answer to the question: What is the excellence of man? as "his eligibility for knowledge and moral action (*Taittirīya-bhāṣya*: II. 1. 1). According to Plato, rationality is the essential part of the soul. Cp. *Kural*, 981.

11. நிறைமொழிமாந்தர் ஆணையிற்கிளந்த
மறைமொழிதானே மந்திரம் என்ப.

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desirably so through the practice of love which like charity begins at home. When a man and woman meet and fall in love, their union is spiritual. Such a love is not the infatuation of the senses which hunger for the gratification of the wishful ego. It is on the contrary the cancellation of the ego and assimilation of one soul into the other. Love is not self-assertion but self-abnegation. The word used by Tolkāppiar is *kāmam*[12] which conveys the sense of being one in union and is the basis for the word *kāmam* which indicates love. Hence, the souls of lovers in their conjugal felicity achieve a united existence by shedding their ego and practising selflessness and make themselves fit for union with God.

When love is based on purely physical considerations, it is called by Tolkāppiar by different names like *Kaḷkiḷai* and *Peruntiṇai*.[13] Persons who become man and wife on the level of the physique do not have the taste of the true love of egoless Oneness. They stand apart and afar in the hearts though physically near. The ideal love on the contrary is referred as அன்பு and classed as *Aintiṇai*.[14] Tolkāppiar thus brings out the nature of the soul and its goal.

Only the soul that incline towards God attain excellence and perfection while those that identify themselves with the body degenerate infected by the corruptibilities of the flesh. This is pictured by the analogy of the vowels combining with '*a*' and with the consonants respectively.[15] Even the consonants attain linguistic excellence when they combine with the vowel 'a' and become imperfect when they identify themselves with other vowels.

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12. கமம் நிறைந்தியலும். (*Uni*, 57).
13. *Tolkāppiam*: *Ahattiṇai*: 50, 51.
14. அன்பொடு புணர்ந்த ஐந்திணை மருங்கின் காமக்கூட்டம்.
(*Ibid.*, *Kaḷavu*: 1).
15. புள்ளியீற்றுமுன் உயிர் தனித்து இயலாது மெய்யொடு
சிவணும் அவ்வியல் கெடுத்தே.
This concept is further reinforced by the fact in Tamil linguistics that the vowels nearer to the vowel 'a' have relatively greater perfections in the order of alphabets than those that come at the tails end. Thus, '*ā*' has excellences that "*au*" does not have.

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Needless to say that the vowels (souls) stand to gain in a much greater measure by such an association with the first and primordial vowel '*a*'.

The rapport of one soul with another as soul, not on the basis of the body, is elevating love in the purest sense[16] and is a model at the human level, of God's own love for man.

Puranānūru employs the simile of the snake casting off its skin to show that the soul is distinct from the body and has a destiny beyond the physical existence. Death is abandoning the old worn-out bodily vesture and birth is taking on a new habitation.[17] *Kuraḷ* uses the example of sleep and waking.[18]

It is only the deeds that one has done that accompany the soul on death. Nothing else that one claims as one's own could be taken with him. One who keeps his trust in the body is deserted by that body on the inevitable death. To live a life of the sense identifying oneself with the body is to wallow in a delusion. Wise men sunder this delusion in the interests of higher life of values.[19] It is clear here that *Puram* distinguishes the soul from the body and warns us positively against our identification with the body as injurious to a spiritual life.[20]

Hedonism is explicitly denied in the *Puram*. If one acts on the faith that pleasure is the end of life, he will be pitifully missing

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16. எல்லாமொழிக்கும் உயிர்வருவழியே
உடமபொடுமெய்யின் உருபுகொளல் வரையார்.
For fuller discussion of this matter see: Dr. Durai Aranganar's: *Tolkāppia-Neṛi*.

17. உரிகளை அரவம் மான.
Cp. the *Gītā* where the simile of the worn-out clothes is used for the same purpose.

18. உறங்குவது போலும் சாக்காடு ; உறங்கி
விழிப்பது போலும் பிறப்பு. *Kuraḷ*: 339.

19. மருள் தீர்ந்து மயக்கொரீஇ.

20. Cp. *Kuraḷ*: 345 and 346.

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many things more permanent value.[21] The immediately pleasant and the ultimately good are contrasted and *Puram* warns that the ultimate good should not be ignored in the hot passion of the present. Strictly speaking the immediately pleasant excitements are not pleasures at all. They are only pain in the deceptive garb.[22]

Puram has a sarcastic dig at those land-hungry war-mongers who are, in their possessiveness and aggrandisement, annex territory after territory under their suzerainty and yet want more and more of it. These colonial imperialists are not a whit better than the uneducated hunter who roam about the dark woods for a game tirelessly. A boorishness characterizes both the annexationist monarch and the cruel hunter. Selfishness and greed are the very antithesis of a cultivated mind.[23]

The hint of the *Puram* is that the appetite of covetousness is whetted with every feeding. There is no end to desire. Pleasure is never completely enjoyed. No possession is final and for all time.[24]

While happiness for one and all is one of the values in *Puram* it does not degrade itself into egoistic hedonism. It places the high destiny of the soul above the other considerations, though such a destiny is realizable only through a full life of love and honour. This is described by Valluvar as வையத்துள் வாழ்வாங்கு வாழ்தல்.

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21. தமவேயாயினும் தம்மொடு செல்லா. (*Puram*: 367); See *Kural*: 342. The *Kaṭhopaniṣad* distinguishes between the *śreyas* (good) and *preya* (pleasant). The *Gītā* speaks of the pleasures that look like heavenly but end in permanent damage and distress; *per contra*, there are things which are hard and painful to begin with but result in permanent felicity.
Cp. *Kural*: 368, 369. See also 331.

22. See *Kural*: 39.

23. தென்கடல் வளாகம் பொதுமையின்றி is the expression used in *Puram* to signify this crass power-hunger.

24. Pleasure should be sharply distinguished from happiness. When in Tamil literature the word இன்பம் is used, it is happiness rather than pleasure that is signified. That happiness is the goal of man can hardly be denied.

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There was at one time a dispute and an indecision whether to bury or cremate the body of a Pandya chieftain. People approached the poet Pereyil Muruvalār for guidance. He said: "Do whatever you please! Bury or burn! The dead body is that of a person who lived a life of honour and achievement. He

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Man ought to aim at happiness, say the ethical hedonists, both in ihe West and in the East. The triad of values in Tamil culture of duty, wealth and happiness belongs to the type of hedonism that is altruistic in contradistinction to egoistic hedonism which holds that one's own happiness is the most desirable. It is immaterial whether in the process of obtaining happiness for oneself, one rides roughshod over others and ruins others' happiness. Aristippus in Greece thought that physical enjoyments are the richest source of pleasure and should be fully cultivated. "Eat, drink and be merry because tomorrow you die". Virtue is ability to enjoy. This is the worst type of hedonism that one comes across in the Indian counterpart of Cārvāka. Utilitarianism has pleaded for the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Epicurus defined pleasure, as the Naiyāyika does in India, as absence of pain and permanent frame of satisfaction.

Epicurus prized mental joys more than physical sensualities. His 'ataraxy' was imperviousness to the impossible and refined enjoyment of the possible. Carlyle corrected the imbalance of the utilitarian principle of the greatest happiness of the greatest number by substituting it by the motto "greatest nobleness principle". It is in work rather than in pleasure that the end of human life is to be achieved. John Stuart Mill abandoned pleasure as the standard for value and, like Plato, wisdom and reason were made the judges. Instead of pleasure as standard, we have a standard for pleasure. It is better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a pig satisfied. Egoistic hedonism is opposed to altruistic hedonism which aims at universal happiness. *Tolkāppiam* may be taken as putting this matter in a nutshell:

காமம் சான்ற கடைக்கோட்காலை
ஏமம் சான்ற மக்களொடு துவன்றி
அறம்புரி சுற்றமொடு கிழவனும் கிழத்தியும்
சிறந்தது பயிற்றல் இறந்ததன் பயனே. (கற்பு: 51)

Cp: *Kural* 50, 75.

Pleasure is never for its own sake; it is intended to be based on the ultimate ideal of universal love.

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led an exemplary life of duty, love and affluence. His soul is noble; it is immaterial how you dispose of his body".[25]

The body is the physical vesture made of flesh and blood; the soul is the indweller. This is the imagery used by Perungunrūr Kiḷār. "My body is invested with five senses", he seems to say, "but the intelligence that owns the body is all that matters".[26] It is not merely that the soul is different from the body; even the intelligence that is the attribute of the soul is different from the body. The attempt of the materialists to reduce man's intelligence to minute atoms is not countenanced here. It is not denied that intelligence cannot appear without a physical basis for it; but it is quite a different thing to say that the physical basis itself is intelligence. It is true that one cannot see without light; but that does not mean that sight is light alone.

PLURALITY OF SOULS

From all accounts in the *Puram* and the *Tolkāppiam*, it would appear that the plurality of souls was an accepted view. *Tolkāppiam* is clear on this. It compares the souls to the vowels. And among the vowels, the first vowel is compared to God, the self of souls.[27] Nowhere any unambiguous attempt seems to have been made to say that all souls are the expressions of one soul

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25. One is reminded of Socrates who uttered similar sentiments. The point is that the soul is treated as of greater value than the body. Socrates told his accusers: Those of us who think that death is an evil are tn error. "The hour of departure has arrived and we go our ways.....I to die, and you to live; which is better God only knows".

    Cp. *Kuraḷ*: 338 and 340 where the imagery of the bird and the cage has been used.

26. பொறிப்புணர் உடம்பில்தோன்றி
    என் அறிவுகெட நின்ற நல்கூர்மை.

27. Just as the soul actuates and controls the body, so does God actuate and control the soul from within. The analogy of the vowel and the consonant makes this clear. The formless vowel actuates the consonants from within. Naccinārkiniyar says: "மெய் பதினெட்டனையும் இயக்கித் தான் அருவாய் வடிவின்றி நிற்றலின் உயிராயிற்று".

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or God. When it talks of a human being as one who is endowed with discerning rationality and not one who has merely a human form,[28] it employs the plural gender though it refers to the 'soul' in general. It is clearly and categorically declared that God stands in the heart of beings as their very self.[29] From the analogy of the first vowel 'a', and its relation to other vowels, it is not difficult to gather not only the view that the souls are many but also that certain innate differences obtain among the souls. The letter closest to the first vowel has the least defects while that vowel which is the remotest has the greatest blemishes. Though it cannot possibly be concluded from this that souls have been graded into a permanent hierarchy on the basis of irrevocable differences as in the Dvaita Vedānta, yet it sounds as if all souls are not equally endowed. Some are nearer God, and some are further away from him. This is rather to be interpreted as a pointer to the differences and disparities found in experience to exist among the souls by virtue of their own choice. Tolkāppiar has accepted the theory of *karma* and as such, diversities among souls could be accounted for by this hypothesis of *karma* and no innate differences among the souls even in the ultimate analysis need be doubted to persist.[30] The differences are traceable to the involvement of the souls in the affairs of the body. The association with the body corrupts the soul;[31] just as the vowel is modified when it combines with the consonant. On the contrary, when the soul combines with God, it undergoes the result of this benign

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28. "மக்கள்தாமே ஆறறிவுயிரே";
"உயர்திணை என்மனார் மக்கட்சுட்டே".
The lesser creation has no rationality.

29. "இறைவன் இயங்குதிணைக் கண்ணும் நிலைத்திணைக் கண்ணும்
பிறவற்றின் கண்ணும் அவற்றின் தன்மையாய் நிற்குமாறு"
is the explanation of Naccinārkiniar.

30. The statement of the *Kural* (199) that at birth the souls are equal can, without much distortion, mean that souls are, in their nature, alike and do not admit of any variations. In short, there is no hierarchy of souls in the ultimate analysis.

31. புள்ளியீற்றுமுன் உயிர் தனித்து இயலாது
மெய்யொடும் சிவனும் அவ்வியல் கெடுத்தே.

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influence. From this it follows that the souls are not intrinsically corrupt and that their corruption or otherwise is brought about by their association with something other than themselves. This seems to reflect the view in Śaiva Siddhānta that the soul has the nature of *sad-asat* according to the company in which it is found.[32]

Yet, there are some utterances in *Tolkāppiam* and *Kuraḷ* which seem to have a philosophical implication of an ultimate oneness of things. *Kuraḷ* in more than one place declares that wisdom lies in the perception of the one reality amidst all the varieties.[33] It tells us also that all words, whosoever speaks them, connote only one reality.[34] In the observed variety of things and the words some unitive principle must be comprehended and intuited. Tolkāppiar distinguishes between the world of things and world of words and commences his *Śolladhikāram* with the statement that all words indicate the object (reality).[35] By proper understanding of the words and their signification, the world of things is comprehended and is transcended in release. God has given his own Word, as it were.[36] He created the elements and the ether among them has the quality of sound which is embodied

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32. சார்ந்ததன் வண்ணமாம் செயல்.
    Cp. *Kuraḷ* : 359, 446, 452.
33. See *Kuraḷ* : 355 ; 358.
34. *Ibid* : 423;
    Kuraḷ implies (351–359) that what normally passes for reality is on test shown to be a deceptive presentation. Sorrow is the result of mistaking the unreal for the real. The senses present a manifold but only analysis can reveal the reality in them. The reality does not coincide with the presented panorama of the senses.
35. எல்லாச்சொல்லும் பொருள் குறித்தனவே. (தொல் : 640).
    Again :
    பொருண்மை தெரிதலும் சொன்மை தெரிதலும்
    சொல்லினுகும் என்மனார் புலவர்.
    The purpose of learning *Tolkāppiam* is said to be the attainment of release through the proper understanding of words and meaning.
    An old verse says :
    " முதல்நூல் பொருளுணர்ந்து கட்டறுத்து வீடுபெறும் ".
36. முனைவன் கண்டது முதல்நூல் ஆகும்.

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in letters and heard by the god-given ears with which to learn His own message so that through the understanding of god-given Word we can know Him and reach the state of release. If all language conveys the One, it may be possible to say that it is one Reality that appears variously as the souls and the world, though this need not necessarily mean a monistic interpretation. For, even dualistic philosophies admit that God is the only reality who is referred to by all words (*sarva-śabdavācya*) and who is the substance in all.

That the presented experiences may be delusive is reinforced in *Kuraḷ* by the criteria like (1) evanescence and finitude and (2) sublation. Impermanence is one criterion for saying that the world is relatively a disvalue.[37] The failure to see the impermanence is the negative condition for the more positive mischief of taking the impermanent as the permanent and the only permanent. This is a delusion that is born of ignorance, for which right knowledge is alone the only remedy.[38] Those who see the truth alone do dot have to return to the life of the senses.

Thus multiplicity of souls and things which, to all appearances, is a fact, may not be the truth. Yet one cannot conclude beyond any doubt that this monistic position was advocated by either *Kuraḷ* of *Tolkāppiam* to the exclusion of every other possibility.

THE CONCEPT OF GOD

Puṟanānūṟu acknowledges the existence of a God who is responsible for the creation, protection and destruction of the world. While mentioning a number of gods like Śiva, Tirumāl and Muruga, *Puṟam* discerns one God as the supreme. It exalts Śiva as the sovereign God,[39] and as the *summum bonum*.[40] He is

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37. *Kuraḷ*: 331.
38. *Ibid*: 331, 351, 352, 355, 356.
    'ஓர்த்து உள்ளம் உள்ளது உணரின் ஒருதலையாய்
    பேர்த்துள்ள வேண்டா பிறப்பு (357)
39. நன்றுய்ந்த நீணிமிர் சடைமுது முதல்வன்.
40. எல்லா உயிர்க்கும் ஏமமாகிய...
    தாழ்சடைப் பொலிந்த அருந்தவத்தோற்கே.

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the imperishable and the immutable. He is beyond temporal and spatial limitations. Avvai blesses Adiyamān Neḍumān Añci and wishes him a life-eternal like Śivas.[41] Śiva is one because there cannot be two realities which are equally ultimate. Two infinites are inconceivable. That which is infinite alone could be real. The minimum definition of reality is that it does not change. It does not suffer the insuffiencies of time, place, substance, attribute and the like. It should be the seat of all perfection. It should be complete and independent. It has in it all that is lacked by the perceived world of objects. When everything else has ceased to exist it continues to be. But if it were not there, the other contingent objects cannot even be. It is the necessary and the sufficient ground of all existence. It is the absolute amidst all relativities and makes the relative possible. It contains all the possibilities within itself.

According to the *Kuraḷ* God is the source of all existence. He is the Supreme Intelligence, without any wants, with unexcelled and incomparable attributes, the embodiment of justice and the infinity of all perfections and the Lord of all. He is the reality in everything and is not merely transcendent but also immanent. The parellel to this conception is found in the way in which the vowel informs the consonant. All letters have 'a' as their first which pervades and informs them. It constitutes their very life and soul as it were. It sustains them from within and yet is transcendent to them staying in its own nature unaffected in its original purity in spite of its immanence. Similarly[42] God, the supreme reality, is transcendentally ever permanently established while the world of time and place and the community of souls are enlivened and directed by Him towards their appointed end and goal. They fulfil His purpose and design and have Him as their destiny. He is the seat of freedom and joy. The souls that reach Him are liberated from all the terrors of finitude. He is the meaning of all learning and knowledge. Actions and their consequences are left behind at His presence. He sets in motion

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41. நீலமணி மிட்ற்று ஒருவன்போல மன்னுக பெரும.

42. *Kuraḷ* : 1 f.

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the wheel of the law of righteousness,[43] presides over the world and the activities of the souls, witnesses them from within, and apportions justice according to the quality of the acts. He is at once the cosmological ground, the teleological end and the moral ruler of the world. God and evil are forces of reason and unreason respectively governed by the exercise of the free-will of man. The soul reaches God only by its own efforts employing its native intelligence though the dispensation of justice is the privilege of the omniscient Being who distributes the prizes and punishments without any preferences and prejudices.[44]

Though God at times is pictured as having a human form in the *Kuraḷ*.[45] places are not altogether wanting where God is the abstract Absolute referred to in the neuter. He is called the "பொருள்" (351), மெய்ப்பொருள் (355), "செம்பொருள்" (358). The liberating power now accordingly belongs to true knowledge.[46] The relation between the Absolute and the world seems to be one of reality and appearance, if we take some utterances of the *Kuraḷ*.[47] There is a suggestion of the deceptive facade of the world concealing the content of reality. The appearance is false only when it effectively bars the vision of the real. Yet axiologically speaking, the world-presentation itself points to reality and has a value. Since there are no two realities, appearance and reality and since appearance is of the reality, it is the occasion of the

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43. He is அறவாழி அந்தணன். He is the embodiment of all that is good (எண் குணத்தான்). But yet he is beyond good and evil. Good as well as bad are relative polar categories fit for the world of time. They produce their results and bind the souls to the temporal rounds of existence. The goal of the soul is to pass beyond time altogether into eternity. God is the point where "இருள்சேர் இருவினையும் சேரா". Both good and evil are "இருள்".

44. He is வேண்டுதல் வேண்டாமை இலான். (4); பற்றற்றான் (350).

45. Man is asked to worship at His feet. See நற்றாள் தொழார் (2); "அடிசேர்ந்தார்க்கு" (4); பற்றற்றான் பற்றினை" (350) for example.

46. See 351 to 360. Roughly this may be said to correspond to the Absolute that is to be known *(jñeya)* and God to be worshipped *(upāsya)* in Śankara's thought.

47. More particularly the stanzas 350–358.

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revelation of the real even in the epistemic sense. Valluvar seems to speak of ignorance (which he calls by various names like "இருள்", "பேதைமை", "மருள்", "மயக்கம்") as the causative force of finitude. He also speaks of "seeing" the truth ("காட்சியவர்க்கு", 'காண்பது அறிவு", "மெய்ப்பொருள் கண்டார்") as equivalent to the experiencing it (உள்ளது உணரின்). Removal of the false vision is brought about by enquiry[48] ("கற்றீண்டு", "ஓர்த்துள்ளம் உள்ளது"): The truth is already established (உள்ளது) and all else of the phenomenal presentations are obscuration to be removed by proper enquiry. All these considerations point to a reality that is existence, consciousness and bliss. That the Reality is the seat of bliss is stated by the *Kuraḷ* in more than one place.[49]

The concept of God in *Tolkāppiam* is, one should think, more systematically developed than in the *Puṟam* and the *Kuraḷ*: This is happily striking because *Tolkāppiam* is the earliest work available to us today to construct ancient beliefs and practices of the Tamil country.

The first fact that strikes Tolkāppiar is that the world is the product of five elements,[50] and consequently it is subject to decomposition according to the principle that whatever is produced by the assemblage of parts must be subject, by the same process, to destruction.[51] So *Tolkāppiam* implies the argument from contingency and the cosmological argument, with God as the

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48. See also the section of "Means to Release" in this monograph. Yet one can point out here that direct realization as a felt experience which is speechless awareness (பேசா அநுபூதி) is the only way of knowing ths Reality. It is not reached by mere learning or logic. Such is the implication of the words like மெய்யுணர்வு, காட்சி etc. Such a divine afflatus comes through the enquiry and study of the holy texts.

49. 4-7; 352, 359, 360.

50. நிலம் தீ நீர் வளி விசும்பொடு ஐந்தும் கலந்த மயக்கம் உலகம் (.589) See also *Puṟam*: 2. Cp. *Kuraḷ*: 27.

51. பல்லாற்றானும் நில்லா உலகம் *Tol.* 1024 (For a methodical development of the philosophical ideas in *Tolkāppiam*, See Dr. M. A. Doraiaranganar's *Tolkāppia Neṟi* published by Meenakshi Nilayam, Madurai, I Edn., 1963).

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first cause. He organised the elements after creation assigning to them their various properties. Since there is nothing apart from Him, the world should be thought to issue forth from God and be dissolved in Him again at His will. Hence it is not farfetched to conclude that God is both the material and the efficient cause of the world.[52]

God and Scripture:

Sound is the property assigned by God to ether (விசும்பு). Letters are sound-symbols. Language thus is the creation of God with the benign purpose of revealing Himself through it to the seekers.[53] The first work in language is that of God Himself.[54] Incidentally this shows that revelation has God Himself as its author as distinguished from theories in India like those of the MImāṁsakas and the Vedāntins who hold that the revelation is timeless and authorless. Again, God can be known only through His own revealed Word. Thus God is both the author and the content of scripture. One with the Indian tradition Tolkāppiar held that God cannot be perceived through the senses as an object, nor, as a consequence, inferred. That which is the presupposition and prius of all that exists, that which makes perception and inference possible, that which is the intelligence of all

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52. *abhinna-nimitta-upādāna-kāraṇa.*

53. It is thus that one can know God through the study of Grammar. This is why again that *Tolkāppiam* starts with the auspicious எழுத்து (Letter) (1) and ends with நூல் (Work) (1610). Of all the auspicious words, Tolkāppiar chose letter as the starting point only to show that God is the source of literature and language.

Tolkāppiar is one with the Naiyayikas who hold that the revelation has God as its author.

54: முதல்வன் கண்டது முதல் நூல் ஆகும் (1594)

The significance of the first verse of the *Kuraḷ* seems to be that the world, as just seen in perception, gives rise to speculation as to its source. This is natural theology as distinguished from dogmatic theology based on the revealed scripture. That is why the *Kuraḷ* says, placing not God but the world as the subject: ஆதிபகவன் முதற்றே உலகு while the first analogical part of the verse, places the vowel 'a' as the subject and first of all letters, where 'a' is comparable to God.

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intelligence can never be placed objectively and thought about. The seer cannot be seen. He is the proof of all proofs. The attempt to prove Him by arguments like the cosmological, ontological and teleological can at best be suggestive of His existence and show that it is not unprovable or implausible that He exists. Or perhaps they may help one to get a frame of mind to know more, being dissatisfied by the commonsense notion of things. *Tolkāppiam* itself, like the *Kuraḷ*, makes use of such arguments and proofs. But, the ultimate authority for God's existence is His own revelation.

While speaking on the land, *Mutaṛporuḷ*, Tolkāppiar anmes the deities presiding over the several types of land. The Mullai has Meyon; the Kurinji has Seyon, the Marutam has Indra; the Neytal has Varuṇa and the Pālai being the desert of the erstwhile fertile lands has the same deity that presided over the lands before they became desolate.

All these five types of land are called by the general name of the world to show that the division is according to the variegated nature of the land like the wild forest, the sea-side, the mountainous region etc. The world itself is one constituted by the five elements. Similarly, though the presiding deities are specified according to the types of land, it is not far to gather that it is one God that appears in several roles. The various gods are worshipped by the inhabitants of the diverse lands according to their modes of occupation and special cultural situation. Naccinārkiniyar says that it is with the intension of making people God-conscious that God who is the subject-matter of the *Karupporuḷ* is mentioned in such detail in connection with the land which occurs under *Mutaṛporuḷ*.[55] Hence, to assume that there were a plurality of gods at that time may not be the exact truth. Tolkāppiar has the concept of the infinite God.[56] Therefore, multitude of Gods are the ways in which one Supreme is

55. தெய்வ வழிபாட்டு மரபிதுவே ஒழிந்தது மரபன்று என்றற்கு: Naccinārkiniyar on *Tol., Aham.*, 5.

56: நன்று பெரிதாகும். *Uri.*, 47.

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thought of for purposes of religious worship. This contention is reinforced by the fact that God is said to assume any form in answer to the prayers of the devoted soul.[57]

Besides such thoughts as these, by a reference to the divisions of land and their presiding deities Tolkāppiar shows that God is the source of all creation and this was realized by the people at that time. The assignment of Gods to their own lands is the acknowledgement with thankfulness of this fact.

There is an aphorism in *Tolkāppiam* which has been puzzling the scholars for a long time. This aphorism has the purpose of showing the way of directing one's love towards God. It consists of the three steps of *Koḍinilai*, *Kandazhinilai*, and *Vaḷḷinilai*. These mean respectively: (a) God, who is essentially nameless and formless, takes forms and names in answer to the seeker's wishes. The unlimited and the unconditioned deliberately comes down within the ambit of human capabilities. A personal God appears in the forms chosen by the seeker. This is the level of devotion and religious worship. (b) The personal God is in its essential condition impersonal infinitude, realized in direct intuition as a result of a philosophical inquiry as distinguished from devotion. The passage from the first to the second is one of religion passing into philosophy, devotion into knowledge as the method of knowing the reality. (c) The third is the stage when God bestows His grace and the soul is liberated. As was stated earlier, this grace can work from without as in religious worship at *Koḍinilai* or can be blossoming from within as knowledge at *Kandazhinilai*. The fact that *Koḍinilai* has been placed first gives us an insight as to the necessity of God's grace even to have the spiritual and intellectual equipment for the comprehension of truth that liberates.

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57. தேவுக்கொளற் பொருட்டே. *Uri.*, 49. See Dr. M. A. Doraiaranganar's *Tolkāppia Neṛi*, (p. 69) for a learned discussion of the entire issue. I have followed here the interpretation of this aphorism by Dr. M. A. Doraiaranganar. Aiyanāridanār, Ilampūranar, Nacchinārkiniyar and M. Raghava Iyengar have given other interpretations.

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The union with reality is the goal of life and its activities, Tolkāppiar declares. This is the greatest triumph and consummation.[58] Hence it is included under *vākai*. This is the same as the *kandazhi*, mentioned earlier, wherein the *summum bonum* has been reached: To realize the unity of all existence is to be filled with grace[59] and to become universal in love: This is the state when one cries in ecstasy that all places are one's own and all are one's kith and kin,[60] as the poet-philosophers of *Puram* fame did. The unity of mankind is the unity of God who is the very constitutive self of one's being:

THE MEANS TO PERFECTION

Tolkāppiam and *Kuraḷ* as well as the *Puram* may be said to insist on knowledge and love as the very means to perfection and felicity: Love presupposes egolessness and sacrifice. This is the essence of renunciation,[61] in practice: The culmination of all knowledge itself is in practice charity, compassion, grace and love.[62] The world is not a dark den of misery to those who practise love. Instead of being a closed mystery the world becomes a happy occasion for sharing the pain of the suffering fellow-beings.[63] The life of love is a life of fearlessness because one has already died to his lower self and has dissolved his narrow ego into the all-comprehensive charity.[64] A man may perform umpteen acts of righteousness but if they are not informed and pervaded by love, they are like a book to the

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58. பொருளொடு புணர்ந்த பக்கம். *Purat*, 75.

59. Hence, Tolkāppiar has extrolled it as,
"அருளொடு புணர்ந்த வாகை"

60. யாதும் ஊரே யாவரும் கேளிர் is the declaration of *Puram*. Cp. *Kuraḷ*: 397: யாதானும் நாடாமால் ஊராமால்.

61. See *Kuraḷ*: 30, 268, 342.

62. *Ibid.*, 242.

63. *Ibid.*, 243, 267. Gold becomes pure and dross is burnt away when put into fire. So does suffering for others burnishes the soul and enriches the true wisdom.

64. *Ibid.*, 72, 76.

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unlettered ignoramus. A person without love is a body without a life in it.[65] The sum and substance of a spiritual exercise is the practice of love towards all beings and it involves the renunciation of the sense of 'I' and mine.[66]

True love based on renunciation involves the true knowledge that the body and the egoity therein do not belong to the soul. They are rather accident. Soul's place belongs to where God is and its dignity is thus divine. God is the immanent substance of the soul. All souls are hence participants in universal brotherhood. Love is the most natural condition of man; division and disunity are the unnatural excrescences caused accidentally by the possession of body which is identified and isolated by name, clan, caste and climate. The individuality is constructed on the two pillars of the 'I' and the 'mine'[67] which are in turn based on the exclusive psycho-physical complex of the body.[68]

It is illusion to believe that the body is oneself. The *Kuraḷ* repeatedly appeals to man to give up the attachment to the body, the sense of "I" and "mine".[69] These are the most potent impediments in the practice of love and they can be removed only by a knowledge of truth- If one learns to see all as sharing a common essence in God the illusions of petty likes and dislikes would disappear.[70] God Himself does not know attachment and aversion. So, the veil of the ignorance and the illusion of distinctions and dualities must have to be rent by a true insight.[71] *Kuraḷ* makes out that true knowledge alone is the sovereign means to the life of love and light. Only illusory notions are destructible by knowledge. Hence, the prejudices of the "I" and the "mine" are born of the elemental ignorance and illusion. Thus, renunciation of petty egoism is marked by the stamp of knowledge.

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65. *Ibid.*, 80.
66. *Ibid.*, 268 to 346.
67. *Ibid.*, 346.
68. *Ibid.*, 345.
69. *Ibid.*, 359.
70. *Ibid.*, 360.
71. *Ibid.*, 351, 352, 355, 359.

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Perverse will and false notions are two sides of the same coin. They are inextricably bound up with each other. True knowledge and renunciation go together as remedies of these twin maladies.[72] It is the misplaced identity with the body and its concerns and commitments that is responsible for much that is miserable. The wise man will not think himself one with the body and so is free from the afflictions that affect it.[73] The soul is eternal and is partner of a divine freedom while the body is a heir to corruption and decay. It is the physical and biological law that bodies that are born should pass away. Disease, decay and death are the tragic fates of the body. The soul that does not confuse itself with the body, being aware of its own high heritage and destiny, does not grieve when the body decays and dies. It is the nature of physical minds and bodies to feel pleasure or pain; one who understands this is neither elated by fortunes nor cowed down by calamity. One who does not jump in joy at a prosperous windfall will not crumble at an adversity.[74] The opposite is the case of an ignorant man. On the stroke of a good fortune his head is turned, as that of a drunkard who is already insane.[75] This ignorance will make the man assert the false to be true and the true to be false.[76] The world-view of the unregenerate is likely to be topsy-turvy. One who is knowledgeable keeps his peace and poise but never fails in his mission of service and sacrifice for the sake of mankind at large. His immovable self-assurance and reverence for life is built on the bedrock of philosophical insight. The insignia of wisdom is this resistless peace,[77] which is intrinsic and natural.[78]

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72. *Kural*: 364.

73. *Ibid.*, 627.

74. *Ibid.*, 626, 628, 629.

75. *Ibid.*, 838.

76. *Ibid.*, 454, 850.

77. See *Kural*: 122, 124, 126.

78. *Ibid.*, 118; 453.

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In the *Tolkāppiam*, the home is the first theatre in which love is to be practised.[79] All the values of life like righteousness, wealth and happiness are realizable only in the home. *Kuraḷ* has named the married life as the source of all ethical behaviour and ethical behaviour alone is productive of supreme happiness and eternal life and all that conduces to the purity of the heart is ethical. But yet knowledge also is a preeminent value *sans* which all the other values are blind. Tolkāppiar insists on knowledge and talks about the hero separating from his spouse for the purpose of learning. Though two souls come together in wedlock almost by destiny or divine dispensation, it is not far wrong to suppose that the man and wife so luckily united should or expected to use the opportunity and enrich the spiritual prospects by their own initiative and effort: Ethical and spiritual excellences are not for the indolent.

Both *Tolkāppiam* and *Kuraḷ* seem to believe that the individual requires the aid of scripture and sacred lore on the one hand and the teacher on the other for the spiritual understanding. The scripture is the disclosure of God to mankind.[80] 'The great souls who possess the vision of truth are the teachers who communicate the wisdom to the seekers in their turn. God's word is revealed through the seers.[81] *Tolkāppiam* mentions the place of the mentors and the guides to life. They are called

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79. The *Kuruntogai* lines bring out the thrill of two hearts coming together as water becoming one with the land in which it flows. The bond seem to be hanging over from the previous births. A man and a woman who are utter strangers lose themselves into each other so completely that there are two bodies but one soul.

செம்புலப் பெயல் நீர்போல
அன்புடை நெஞ்சம் தாம் கலந்தனவே.

Kuraḷ uses the same simile in another context: See 452. Tee *Tolkāppiam*: *Kaḷavu*: 1; See also *Kaḷavu*: 2.

80. முதல்வன் கண்டது முதல் நூலாகும்.

81. நிறைமொழி மாந்தர் ஆணையிற் கிளந்த
மறைமொழிதானே மந்திரம் என்ப. (Sey: 178).

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Vāyil.[82] Among them we find the sages (அறிவர்) who put people on the way whenever they go wrong.[83] They lead the soul by the hand as it were both in this world and in the next.[84] Secular as well as spiritual well-being is guarded by them. *Kuraḷ* tells us that the sages (சான்றோர் according to *Puram*) are capable of removing the pain that has already accrued and of preventing the fresh misery. They are the source of great strength in meeting the travails of life. They constitute the vision of the world. No power can harm one who has the guidance of the wise. One who has no protection of the wise men will be like the businessmen without a capital.[85] One whe offends such sages will reap disaster.[86] All great literature speaks their glory. They do not have any self-interest and therefore speak the truth with objectivity in the interest of all.[87] *Puranānūru* declares that the world is supported and sustained by the wise sages.[88] The wise men see truth face to face in a mystic vision.[89] The *Puram* mentions the Vedas as always being chanted by God.[90] Sacred lore of ethical codes is mentioned by *Puram*.[91]

THE NATURE OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD

Tolkāppiam is aware of the fact that the physical world of nature is made of the five elements of earth, water, fire, air and

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82. அகம்புகு மரபின் வாயில்கள் (*Karpu*: 11. They are ஏமம் சான்ற மக்கள் (*Karpu*: 51).

83. *Karpu*: 13, 14.

84. *Karpu*: 37.

85. *Kuraḷ*: 441–450. There are sages who have realised the truth in this very life. *Kuraḷ*: 356.

86. *Ibid*, 896-900.

87. *Kuraḷ*: 118.

88. *Puram*: 182. The poet-philosophers of the *Puram* are outstanding saints, Piśirāndhayār says that the reason why he has not greyed is that his place is one where sages abound.

89. This is called as திறவோர் காட்சி according to Pānkunranār according to whom sages see everything as their kith and kin.

90. முதுமுதல்வன் வாய் போகாது .. ஆறுணர்த்த முதுநூல்.

91. 34.

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ether: Tolkāppiar would divide the world into words and categories (சொல், பொருள்). The categories themselves again may be divided in another way into rational souls and the dead and inert.[92] In yet another way, the categories are: time, world soul, body, God, action, elements, sun, moon, and the word.[93] This division seems to be ethical in its motif. Understanding the role of time, the soul living amidst souls like itself does deeds with the body in the world of elements: And God judges the acts and distributes the results. The soul performs actions in the world of light provided by the sun and the moon, which are measures of time and it dispels its inner darkness and ignorance by the revealed word.

In another way, the world is divided on epistemological and psychological principales into those which are perceived by the external senses and by the internal sense of mind. The external objects are perceived by the external sense. The objects of internal perception are (1) the feeling of suitability between lovers (2) fear (3) aversion (4) chastity (5) growth (6) an appearance of tendency of further growth (7) softness of being (8) shyness (9) perseverance in what one has learnt (10) pangs of separation (11) passion (12) the enjoyment of sense-experiences.[94]

From the axiological point of view, another division is attempted. In this case there are two categories: (1) the inner and (2) the outer (அகம் and புறம்). Happiness (இன்பம்) constitutes the first while that which could be publicly known and communicated constitute the second. This consists in அறம் and பொருள்.

The first *ahattiṇai* is divided into seven aspects like *Kaikkiḷai. Aintiṇai, Peruntiṇai* etc. Of these, *Aintiṇai* is relevant to our purpose. In consists of three categories of *Mutal, Karu* and *Uri,*

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92. உயர்திணை என்மனார் மக்கட் சுட்டே
அஃறிணை என்மனார் அவரல பிறவே
ஆயிரு திணையின் இசைக்கு மன சொல்லே.

93. *Sol.*, 57.

94. *Poruḷ.*, 247.

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Of these three, land (space) and time are the first. Of these land is fivefold: that of forest, mountainous region, riverside plain, the seashore, and the desert. This is called the elements of earth (நிலம்).

But the physical world consists of earth, water, fire, air and ether.[95] The world, according to the character of the five elements, is perceived through the five senses.[96] Earth has the quality of smell, and the other elements have taste, colour, touch and sound respectively. The senses perceive their respective qualities and are thus coordinated with the nature of elements.

Time is, as was stated, one of the categories according to *Tolkāppiam*. It is measured by day and night. Sun and moon are mentioned only for this purpose. Time has the property of making things live through it and disappear. It makes things born, grow, decay and die.[97] To know the essence of time is wisdom.[98] Time is the beginning of creation: God stands first in the series but He is not a member of the series. Rather in Him time ends. Time thus seems to be synonymous with change and motion. At any rate, time is measurable only in terms of the motion of spatial quantities.[99] Space and time thus become inseparable and all movements thus become relative. In that case, time also ceases to be absolute. Tolkāppiar placed space and time together as *Mutaṟporuḷ*.[100]

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95. நிலம் தீ நீர் வளி விசும்போடைந்தும் கலந்த
மயக்கம் உலகம். *Marabu*: 90.

96. *Kuraḷ*: 27. *Tolkāppiam* has coordinated the divisions of land with the emotions and modes of life and religious worship. See commentary by Naccinārkiniyar on *Aham*, 5 (see also *Aham.*, 14) Dr. M. A. Doraiarangaswamy calls these lines the *Mahāvākya* of *Tolkāppiam*. See his *Tolkāppia Neṟi*, p. 169.

97. *Kuraḷ*: 331.

98. *Ibid.*, 334, 358. Time is divided into seasons, the phases of the day like morning and evening.

99. See Parimelaḷagar's commentary on *Kuraḷ* 334.

100. *Tol. Aham.*, 4. This is in a way brought out by the fact that the various geographical regions like the plain, the mountanous region,

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The role that time plays in the history and destiny of things has been keenly observed and an overall pattern of physical nature has been noticed by the *Tolkāppiam Kuraḷ* and *Puram*. A whole philosophy of life has been raised on the fascinating properties of time.

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the seashore and the forest are susceptible to geological and ecological changes. The desert is only the wasted ruin of other types of land. From the seas mountains arise; whole continents became sea. Seas become deserts. Rivers change their courses. There could be no permanency in the land formations.

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CHAPTER III

THE UNIVERSAL IMPERMANENCE

In the *Tolkāppiam*, the very structure of the physical world contains within it the seeds of decomposition. It is a product of the five elements and the law that anything that is a product is subject to disintegration seems to have quite well grasped. To the common sense, world does not appear as a product. It requires a penetrating analysis to see that the world is a composite structure that can be reduced to its constituent parts. It is not merely that there are earth, water, fire, air and ether as found in nature. That is obvious enough even to a casual observer. The world is a *combination* of the elements and as such, every element is mixed with every other in just proportion. It follows that everything in this world is a compound of all the five elements in diverse proportions.[1]

This composite fabric of the world is subject to the law of becoming. The impermanence as a fact of nature is collectively designated as *kāñci*.[2] Death is as certain as birth. Philosophy is meditation on death. The inevitability of death is brought out in this *kāñci*.[3] The question as to the whence and wherefore of things triggers off the enquiry into one's own destiny in this stream of becoming. It results in the balancing of life and its conduct. This is the basic lesson in the school of life.

This is followed by *mutukāñci* where the wise old men warn the younger generation against postponing the considerations of

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1. This is the significance of the words: கலந்த மயக்கம் உலகம். See *Marabu*.
2. பாங்கரும் சிறப்பிற் பல்லாற்றானும்
நில்லா வுலகம் புல்லிய நெறித்தே. *Purat.* 76.
Here the word 'சிறப்பு' signifies the permanent felicity which is the goal of man. To reach this goal a constant awareness of the impermanence of things and a tireless vigilance are necessary.
3. *Purat.*, 77. மாற்றருங் கூற்றம் சாற்றிய பெருமை.

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righteousness and philosophical reflection to the evening of life under the impression that youth is a perpetual condition and will run its course unalterably. One should make hay when the sun shines.[4] Youth is the best time of maximum energy for the practice of virtues and values. The scattering away of vital power in the diverse sports of the senses will cut asunder the life-current before its time. Youth is comparable to wild rapids that subside as quickly as they rise.

The evanescence of the body is brought out in *maṟakkāñci*. Wealth and power do not protect the dying man. This is the warning by the *peykāñci*. Near and dear ones beat their breasts and tear their hair over the dead body. This is pictured by *mannaikkāñci*. The wife, who till then embraced the body in amorous love, avoids the corpse in disgust and fear. This is called *toḍākkāñci*. A woman weeping all alone over the lifeless body of her husband is a tragic sight; this is *tāṅgarumpaiyuḷ*. People think twice before offering their daughters to kings in marriage for fear that he may die any time in battles. This is *mahatpārkāñci*.

The way in which the *Kuraḷ* develops the idea of impermanence is well known. There is a decade of verses devoted to impermanence. It is total backwardness of intellect not to be impressed by the pervading impermanence of things and to perversely mistake the fleeting for the eternal. Wealth accumulates

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4. *Puṟat*: 79. See *Puram*: 195, 363 for instance.

The Kāñcis concerning men are ten. Some of them have been mentioned above. They apply to women also. There are Kāñcis where woman enters the funeral pyre in self-immolation on her husband's death. A woman may die spontaneously on the news of the death of her husband or even her son in war. See *Puram*: 363, 195, 281, 84, 255, 229, 245, 246.

Kuraḷ: 331–340. Heraclitus in Greek thought emphasised change like the Buddhists in India who developed impermanence into momentariness where nothing exists for more than a moment. *Maḻhima-nikāya* declares: "For all that is, when clung to, falls short". Reality is a condition of unrest, said Heraclitus in his *Fragments*. "Worlds roll on like bubbles on a river, sparkling, bursting, borne away".

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as crowd gathers in a theatre; when the performance is over, the crowd disperses into thin air. Time gnaws constantly at life. The world has one greatness about it and that is that those who were with us yesterday are no more today. It is a pity that people do not pause for a moment to consider the true nature of the world. The soul inhabiting the body has yet to find an abiding abode.

In the *Puram*, the fleeting character of the world is described again and again in luminous imagery. Gothamanār tells a king: "Emperors who ruled the world under one umbrella have returned to the mud; let me tell you one thing. Do the good when there is yet time. It is a stark fact of life that people die like sheep butchered in the slaughterhouse. Death is a fact: not a fancy".[5]

In another place Śriuvendariār employs the same words. He says that there is no soul which resides in the body for ever.[6]

The intention of the poet-philosophers of the *Puram* was to focus the attention of people, set them reflecting on the basic puzzles and problems of life and make them seek the enduring realities and values that underlie the passing phenomena. They are doing the subtle philosophical task of putting things in proper perspective. They expose the insufficiency of the commonsense notions and the first looks. There is much more in the world than what meets the eye.

The evenescence of the world is of such a magnitude that seven kingdoms roll to dust in the span of a single short day. The world itself does not tolerate the perverts who do not understand this truth and who revel passionately in its enchantments. It bags them in its cruel nets with no hopes to freedom. On the contrary, it heaps its gifts on the brave who have judged its real worth and left it to stew in its own juice. Their

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5. மடங்கலுண்மை மாயமோ வன்றே. 366

3. வீயாது உடம்பொடு நிற்ற உயிருமில்லை
மடங்கலுண்மை மாயமோ வன்றே. 363

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answer to its seductive attentions is a plain indifference and disgust. The world despises those who cling to it and rewards those who despise it.[7] This is the paradox of pleasure. The best way of getting pleasure is not to seek it.

It is not a creed of world-denial of a misanthrope sour-grapism; nor is it a mechanism of the disgruntled defeatist. The scale of values preferred by the philosophers of the *Puram* is not a pathological condition of a morbid sub-conscious. Their poems are not the plaintive wails of weaklings who have been cheated by chance or foiled by fate. They are not rationalisation of failures. On the contrary, they argue from strength and conviction, having lived a full and eventful life. They declare that only when the plenitude and prosperity of earthly riches are being enjoyed their inherent shortcomings become manifest all the more. It is when one has all that could be desired that the poignant truth dawns that such satisfaction cannot last. Impermanence is therefore not a state of mind, but a law of nature. We cannot command it to permanence at our will. The sting of evanescence is felt keenly when one has just shaped the world to his heart's desire and finds in dismay that the whole order before long exhibits cracks. The theory of impermanence is not the result of an impulse or ill-temper. It is the considered conviction born of a sober estimation of all evidences both for and against. There is neither non-observation nor mal-observation. *Tolkāppiam*, *Kuraḷ* and *Puram* alike insist that renunciation is born of a depth of wisdom, not of a temporary mood.[8] Valluvar commends

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7. விட்டோரை விடாள் திருவே, விடாதோர்
இவள் விடப்பட்டோரே, says Vānmikiyar. *Puram*: 358.

8. Renunciation and philosophical indifference blossom from a rich, ripe and round life. Such an active life was called in *Tolkāppiam*. as *Vāhaittiṇai*, which is logically followed by *Kāñcittiṇai* depicting the temporality of things. Then follows the *Pāḍāntiṇai* describing realization of truth. The system of values has thus been graded. See *Tolkāppiam Purat.*, 75.

பொருளொடு புணர்ந்த பக்கத்தானும்
அருளொடு புணர்ந்த அகற்சியானும்
காமம் நீத்த பாலினானும் என்று
இருபாற்பட்ட ஒன்பதின் துறைத்தே.

See *Tol., Purat.*, 74-75.

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the *Puram* when he says that a sense of renunciation and detachment are the surest means to genuinely possess and enjoy wealth and pleasures. The sensualist does not understand the secret of pleasure and so he seeks it desperately. He is head over ears immersed in it, not realizing that in this very process he is losing in the roundabouts what he is gaining in the swing.[9]

Puram is interested in inciting people to the performance of the right and the good at the proper time when every thing is in their power.[10] The imperative urgency of the predicament is inculcated and the timely warning to take time by the forelocks is issued to those who would otherwise rest on the ores and allow time to get the better of them. Life is a disciplined affair involving a series of sacrifices to deserve the thrills of joy.[11] It is war with the internal forces as well as external foes. *Puram* prepares us for both the fronts. The life of action without egoistic attachment is more glorious than abandoning life altogether. *Puram* grows eloquent about the discipline and sacrifice. It weighs in the balance the life of senses and of detachment and finds the former wanting.[12] To live the life of a householder is a discipline much more exacting than that of a wandering mendicant. A true householder has the competency of an ascetic monk for renunciation but has preferred the home if only because he should protect the interests and provide the basic needs of those who have renounced the hearth and the home.[13] This is an additional burden of responsibility to be shouldered by the householder because he has already his duties towards other sections of society and to the departed ancestors and to God. He has to set an example of righteousness for others to follow.[14] In short, the life of the home is a life of strictest discipline and self-denial with more responsibili-

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9. *Kural*: 266.
10. *Ibid*: 36, 333.
11. *Ibid*: 44.
12. வையமும் தவமும் தூக்கின் தவத்துக்கு
    ஐயவியனைத்தும் ஆற்றாது. (358)
13. *Kural*: 263.
14. *Ibid*: 48.

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ties than rights, voluntarily and knowingly imposed upon oneself in a larger perspective of life, its meaning and goal. Thus the home is a spiritual and moral institution raised on the philosophical insight into the worths and values of things. We shall deal with this aspect of life later in the sequence of this work with special reference to *Puram*.

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

If the world has been created by God, it is asked, why is there evil in it? The obvious presence of evil is an obstruction to belief in the validity of the teleological argument in particular which attempts to ground God's existence on the purposeful design of the world. But evil and pain are thorns in the flesh of theism and all its persuasions. There have been, in the history of human thought, many attempts by philosophers and scientists to prove that a cosmic designer like a God is a needless assumption and that the world-order could be accounted for by mechanical or organic evolution. Anaximander, (611–547 B. C.) in Greece argued that live organisms sprang from the sea and evolved into the creatures of the land. Charles Darwin in his *Origin of Species* (1859) proposed the hypothesis that organisms evolve by natural selection from the unicellular amoeba to the most heterogeneous and complex primates. Biological evidences have tended to strengthen the Drawinian hypothesis. From the synthesis of uric acid in the laboratory, the first organic compound to be produced from non-organic ones, to the protein molecules, it is a steady attempt to explain life without any reference to a cosmic designer or God. Darwinian theory, in essence, is a rebuff to the theory of instantaneous creation of the world by God with a purpose of His own. It supplanted creationism by evolutionism.[15]

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15. In India, the world was explained as the combination of the atoms (Vaiśeṣika) or the evolution of the primordial matter which is one and homogeneous (Sāṅkhya.) In the former, the resulting formation will be new and more than the atomic parts. This may or may not involve God. Yet, the combination of atoms *does* require an agency like moral potencies of the souls which are non-atomic and non-mechanical. In the latter, matter evolves only under the influence of the spirit-intelligence of

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But more than any thing else, Darwinian hypothesis called into question a benevolent design in the world-process. The scene of evolution is a series of struggle and strife, pain and death. Life is a race for existence, in which the weak have no place. They are just thrown to the walls. The world is inherited by the strong among the species. The individual life is expendable. Nature is red in tooth and claw; species of living beings, a thousand types of them, are gone blown about the desert dust. Adaptability to wind and rain, heat and cold is the badge of the victorious; others simply die out into oblivion. Nature may, for aught we know, have a design but the design is not calculated to be merciful or gentle. The design, at best, is only a law of the jungle, John Stuart Mill put it in his *Three Essays on Religion* (pp. 28–30): 'Nature impales men, breaks them to death, crushes with stones like the first Christian martyr, starves them with hunger, freezes them with cold.....has hundreds of other hideous deaths in reserve such as the ingenious cruelty of a Nabis or a Domitian never surpassed."

Wonders of organic structure which are thought to be God's own handiwork are often engines of torture callously indifferent to the pain of the victim. Witness the boa-constrictor devouring inch by inch its prey alive mangling everyone of its bones and tissues. Human body is a marvel but look at the way in which cancer eats away a vital centre of the body slowly, surely and silently grinding the victim to steady emasculation in unbearable pain till death comes as a relief.

In short, the problem of evil sends a chill into the glowing enthusiasm of teleology. Epicurus shouted: "Is God willing to

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the soul. Hence, neither of these theories countenances mechanism or natural selection. Only the Indian materialism has a place for a thoroughgoing mechanistic theory. It holds that the world is an arrangement of the atoms. Neither Anaximander nor Darwin, however, explains how any primordial matter of any kind as the basic stuff happened to come into being to make any later evolution possible. Darwin explained the *survival* of things, not their *arrival*. The synthetic formation of molecules presupposes the elements out of which such a protein could be artificially constructed. These elements themselves should be explained.

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prevent evil, but not able? Then he is not omnipotent. Is he able, but not willing? Then he is malevolent".[16]

There are however a few attempts of meeting this challenge. (a) One way is to deny the evil altogether and say it is more illusory (as the contemporary Christian Science does) than real. We do not *think* that there are pain and suffering; there *are* pain and suffering. (b) Evil may be taken to be merely negative. a privation, or absence of good.[17] (c) Evil is always a *necessary* evil. It is the footstep to the good. Good shines by contrast. Surgery to regain health, war to end all war, are instances of this indispensable instrumentality of evil to good. A world in which there is no evil and ugliness will be depressingly dull and will lack all the incentives to effort.[18] It is by a struggle that one conquers evil and establishes good. It the good were the natural possession of man, there will be nothing that will be called good, just as to obey the law of gravitation is not deemed a virtue. (d) After all, it is man's freedom of action that results in evil.[19] It may be said that there is difference between moral evil and natural evil. While mnn could be held responsible for moral evil, the natural evil at least cannot be attributed to

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16. David Home argued in the form of complex constructive dilemma: "If the evil in the world is from the intention of the Deity, then he is not benevolent. If the evil in the world is contrary to his intention, then he is not omnipotent. But it is either in accordance with his intention or contrary to it. Therefore either the Deity is not benevolent or he is not omnipotent".

17. Wallace I. Matson argued against this in his *Existence of God* (pp. 142–143): Trouble is (with one who has malaria) not that he lacks anything, but rather that he has too much of something, namely, protozoans of the genus *Plasmodium*.

18. Tennyson's poem. *The Lotus Eaters* wishes for such dreamful case, the peace of the womb.

19. It is not logically impossible that man could have been made by God to choose always the good. Otherwise His omnipotence is limited, says J. L. Machie in *Mind*, April, 1955. But it is not a limitation upon God's power that he cannot accomplish, the logically impossible since there is nothing here to accomplish, but only a meaningless combination of words, John Hick, *Philosophy of Religion*, II Edn., p. 39.

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him. For this God alone must take the responsibility. But things have their own nature and it takes all sorts of nature to make a world. Fire should burn, water should cool. If the elements of physical nature do not always run smoothly *vis-vis* each other, we have volcanic eruptions, storms, floods and earthquakes. Sometimes the cells of the body run amuck and cancer results. It is perhaps a dangerous world that we are living in. But God has placed in man an intelligence that is mightier than the elements. Humanity as a species has survived by sheer exerecise of intelligence the crucial tests of nature and has made it yield some at least of its secrets and shed some at least of its mysteries. If a God has made this world at all, He has not made man piteously hopeless and his life in it meaninglessly futile. It is true that there is evil in the world; but it is equally true that there is a good deal of goodness. It is true that the world is hostile to life in many ways. But it is demonstrably true that nature is also friendly in many ways. Where it is hostile, it has often been tamed. Not infrequently spirit has triumphed over the tyranny of nature. Such a power of intelligence, not to speak of the grandeur of moral sense, is also, one cannot but remember, an integral part of the same natural order.[20] Good is ingrained within the very system where evil is said to be overwhelmingly present. If evil were all that there is in the natural order of things, it will not have been counterbalanced by an intelligence with its moral sense as a built-in force. One might have wished for a readymade world of infinite perfection, instead of a growing world of struggle and pain. But that presupposes a thirst for perfection. It is not hard to see that a perfection and felicity offered on a platter as it were would be rarely satisfying. Perhaps the theist may urge, God has made the world fit for adventure and enterprise with all the thrill of the struggle itself. There is nothing comparable to the beauty and love, the

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20. Even when natural calamities occur, it must be remembered that they are not fortuitous accidents but are the result of the very laws that govern every atom of their being. When a military officer throws a child to the wolves to tear it to pieces, it is perversion of the will for which man alone is responsible. The child suffers and it stings the conscience of man. Suffering is the way all progress takes.

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twin forces of assault on a hostile world. With intelligence, man bends nature to his will and purpose and with love he conquers the moral evil of sin, cruelty and suffering. It is the mind that makes hell or heaven of the world.

David Hume considers the Upanishadic hypothesis of God weaving the worlds after worlds like a spider with its own saliva and spits out the sarcasm: Were there a planet wholly inhabited by spiders, this inference would there appear as natural and irrefragable as that which in our planet ascribes the origin of all things to design and intelligence.....Why an orderly system may not be spun from the belly as well as from the brain, it will be difficult..... to give a satisfactory reason".[21] But imagine a fish in the sea trying to understand a submarine. It will conjecture, if it could, so many possibilities but all these possibilities are *its* possibilities, and the fish will examine everyone of these possibilities and perhaps would dismiss them eventually as ridiculous. But does this make the submarine any the less real? On the contrary, if, by some stroke of luck, the fish conceives the submarine as the work of a vastly superior intelligence, though it is beyond it to say whether it is an analogous intelligence working in the way in which its own intelligence operates, it will not be far wrong. The fish can never have the remotest idea of the goals and purposes of the submarine. Yet it may not stop wondering at it[22] It will however be terribly mistaken if it supposed that the submarine is anything that the world of fish alone could have produced. Similar is the predicament of man with a world facing him.[22]

In the *Puram*, a poet-philosopher wonders at the pervasive evil in the world. His heart sinks at the sight of misery. He cries in anguish: "Alas! This world is cruel!" (இன்னுதம்ம

21. *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion:* Part VII, p. 117. (N. K. Smith Edn.)

22. F. R. Tennant (*Philosophical Theology*) (1930) has enlarged the scope of the teleological argument to include man's religious, moral, aesthetic and cognitive experience and argues that it is more probable that a God exists than not. This is based on "alogical" probabilities.

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இவ்வுலகம்). The scene that he witnesses is first a house where death has struck the blow; the young wife has lost her husband; the funeral drums beat; the girl weeps her heart out; misery is writ large on every one around. His attention then is drawn to another house where a wedding is taking place. Festivity, fun and frolic fill the air. People sing and dance: eat and drink and are in every way merry.

These two contrasting scenes of mourning and mirth raise the doubt in the mind of the poet whether a sensible God could have been the cause for both. Could such a God be just and fair? Hardly, thinks the poet, and concludes that the world is cruel. Of course, he has in mind the natural evil here.[23]

The problem of evil at once assumes a very large proportion. Pūnkunranār in the *Puram* says that good and evil are not externally caused but are brought about by one's own deeds.[24] Nangaṇiyār seems to think that God is the author of evil.[25] Nariverūttalaiyār is inclined to the view that evil is not merely a

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23. Dualism holds that God and Satan are contrary intelligent forces eternally in war. Zoroastrianism and Manicheanism are of this view. In popular Hinduism, good and evil are eternally in battle in the hearts of men though God sides with the good. Buddhism and Jainism, the Sāṅkhya and the Mīmāṁsā believe that good and bad are willed by man without an intervention of any God. Advaita believes that reality is beyond good and evil altogether. The theory of a finite deity is advocated by the Boston Personalist school with an intractable evil opposed to Him. Augustine thought that evil is the distortion of the good. The world could be a theatre of 'soul-making' with all its "heart-aches and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to". For this purpose, more than one life may be necessary, perhaps, more than one world. A similar view is expressed in *Evil and the God of Love* by John Hick (1968); *God and Evil* edited by Nelson Pike (1964); *Evil and the Concept of God* by Edward H. Madden and Peter H. Hare (1968). A very good comparison is available in the concept of தடுத்தாட் கொள்ளல் in the Tamil philosophy of religion.

24. நன்மையும் தீமையும் பிறர்தர வாரா. (192)

25. படைத்தோன் மன்ற அப்பண்பிலாளன்.

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privation or absence of good but is as much positive as good.[26] It is one thing to do good and quite another to do the evil.

Nangaṇiār who cries that the world is cruel and evil gets over this mood of despair soon and says reassuringly that good and evil are found in mixed proportions, and understanding this, one can work for the good triumphing over evil. But how exactly is one to do this?

Everyone is endowed with the discriminative intelligence with which one can anticipate the oncoming evil and forestall it. When one has the energy of action and the perceptive power one has to choose the good and neutralise the potency of evil.[27] God who has planted evil along with the good in the world has also endowed man with power to fight the evil whether it is natural or moral. The hostile world is a challenge to man's ingenuity. The response of man is to discover by unremitting effort the ways of anticipating natural havocs like floods and famine, storm and earthquake, epidemic and pest. Mankind has been increasingly succeeding in its assaults on nature's idiosyncrasies. Just as raw nature was the gift of God and nurture was man's thankful response, truancy sometimes is nature's mood and its mending is man's need. Nature gave us the watercourses; man built dams to store them. Science has exploited the niggardly provisions of a step-motherly nature to the best advantage. With the sophisticated technology, man is able to predict natural events and face them with precautions. Natural evil is no more that much frightening as it was to the primitive mind. Nature is a best servant provided we know its ways and canalise them. The *Puram*, therefore, asks us to liberate ourselves from servility and creatureliness into mastery and lordship. Human effort stops at nothing. In the battle against evil, victory to man is certain. Good is established in the teeth

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26. நல்லது செய்தல் ஆற்றீராயினும்
அல்லது செய்தல் ஓம்புமின். (195)

Kural expresses a similar sentiment. (1062). If to go with a begging bowl is the only course open for living, let the one who created such a world be cursed.

27. இன்னுவைகல் வாராமுன்னே
செய்நீ முன்னிய வினையே, says Tiruventerayar.

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of evil. Good itself will become meaningless if there were no opposing evil. Even within man's heart, good and evil are contending constantly for suzerainty. Life persists amidst death; good reigns amidst evil. Just as in the struggle for existence successful adaptation scores the victory, which is the ability to live in tune with nature, to use the better part of nature to the maximum is the secret of survival on the moral plane. After all, good is as much a part of nature as evil.

The *Kuraḷ* warns that one who does not rely on his own initiative and effort to foresee the events and take precautions against the untoward will perish like dry straw in fire.[28] An intelligent person will have an insight into what is to come.[29] Nothing strikes him by surprise.[30] To resist the tendency of the mind to follow the evil and to direct it towards the good is precisely the function of intelligence.[31] Intelligence that sifts the good from the bad with foresight is the defining characteristic of man; without it, a man is a puppet in the hands of wayward senses.[32] The difference between an animal and a man is measured by the difference between intelligence and the lack of it. A man who endeavours to reach perfection will treat evil itself as good.[33] In the face of an impregnable fortitude, the evil dissolves itself. The surest way to conquer evil is not to give in to its pressures. Ceaseless effort and undaunted will, like that of the bull that pulls the cart over the uncharted terrain,[34] will call the bluff of evil, as knowledge does of ignorance. Intelligence is the gift of God as an instrument with which one should fortify himself against evil.[35]

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28. 435. See also 461–470.
29. 427.
30. 429.
31. 422.
32. 407.
33. 630.
34. 624.
35. 421.
Tolkappiar distinguishes between those who are endowed with intelligence and who are capable of discriminating between the good and the bad and those who have the form of a human being but really are equal to animals. These are respectively called மக்கள் and மாக்கள்.

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Desire is the mother of all suffering.[36] The abhorrence of desire is called the right and the good,[37] because it results in continuous happiness.[38] *Kuraḷ* is emphatic that happiness is the consequence of the good and the right alone.[39]

Tolkāppiam, Kuraḷ and *Puram* alike are one crescendo of call for an all-out offensive against evil. They place the spirit of man above the forces of blind nature. They are not oblivious to the presence of the evil stalking its prey. They take a realistic picture of the world in all its beauties and terrors. Yet they hold that life's prizes are to be won against all comers. They also believe that man's spirit is invincible and that it turns the wilderness of world into a meaningful ground of spiritual and moral exercises. While it is nature's law to change, it is the law of spirit to endure. The sages of Tamil culture did not despise the world and bodily existence in it; but knew the limitations of such an existence. Perhaps because of this awareness, they deemed every fleeting moment of life as of immense value. They devised a way of life which is the best answer to the depredations of time. They formulated a discipline of life based on values, both material and spiritual, that tended to prolong the life-span and the vigour of vital power. At the same time, they were not hedonistic given to a life of ease and comfort. At times of crisis they placed valour and duty above life and its warmth. Honour was their badge.[40]

Conquest of the internal forces of the mind as well as external forces of danger was considered equally important in the

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36. 361.
37. 366.
38. 369.
39. 39.
40. cf. *Tolkāppiam* :

    கூதிர்வேனில் என்றிரு பாசறைக் காதலின் ஒன்றிக் கண்ணிய மரபு.

    Love of the country and readiness to defend it from aggression were as much spontaneous as love for one's own wife. The *Puṟam* specifies it as a duty of the young brave men :

    களிறெறிந்து பெயர்தல் காளைக்குக் கடனே.

    To defeat the enemy or to die were the only alternatives on the warfield.

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Tolkāppiam. This was called by the distinguished name of *vāka* which comprises every vital feature of life. A warrior will prefer his outpost to trysts with his lover. This is the conquest of passions at the call of the country (பாசறை வென்றி). Poets used to sing the glories of the tilling farmer as well as the triumphs of the dauntless soldier. This is the conquest at the war-front (களவென்றி). The pleasures of peace and the rigours of war were accepted with equal eagerness and felicity. There was an awareness of the transience of life; hence young men went in for fame by doing great deeds of bravery. This was மறவென்றி. A warrior, when he failed in his challenge to extinguish the enemy, will rather kill himself than survive the disgrace. This was சொல்வென்றி. Keeping one's plighted word in the social life is as much a part of civilized existence as fulfilling one's pledge in the war. Agriculture as an occupation is as much worthy of respect as the duties of an army. This is brought out by the expression "தொழில் வென்றி". While an interest in worldly welfare is indispensable for a healthy social participation, a certain dispassion towards the merely secular is also the mark of a regenerate mankind. Material well-being is not all, though important. A preparedness to shed ownerships and attachments completes the perfecting process. This is called துறவு வென்றி.[41] Life thus is a continuous struggle with evil with a wealth of well-tested *modus vivendi*. *Tolkāppiam* analyses life and finds that it is short and that art is long. Youth is fleeting. And a life of poverty is degrading while one who has resources is held in esteem. To be above want economically is the prerequisite of a spiritual life. People of that age realized this and hence gave no quarter to idleness. Happiness was won at a heavy price.[42]

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41. See *Tolkāppiar Kālat-Tamiḻar* by Pulavar Kulandai, Pari Nilayam, II Edn. 1968. p. 207–11.

42. நாளது சின்மையும் இளமையது அருமையும்
தாளாண் பக்கமும் தகுதியது அமைதியும்
இன்மையது இளிவும் உடைமையது உயர்ச்சியும்
அன்பினது அகலமும் அகற்சியது அருமையும்
ஒன்றுப்பொருள்வயின் ஊக்கிய பாலினும்.

(*Tol.*, *Akat.*, 41.)

Cp. *Kuraḷ*: 247, 611–620, 751–766, Also see 591–600.

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Severe travails were welcome if only because they fetched at the end fame and honour.[43] Hence it is clear that whatever evil obtained in nature was neutralised by initiative and drive, excellence of planned action and discerning wisdom.

THE CONCEPT OF DESTINY

In *Puranānūru*, as in *Tolkāppiam* and *Kural*, destiny (ūl) and its inevitability are mentioned in a number of places. The honest efforts of men break like brittle straw. People who are the very antithesis of active labour seem to revel in unexpected good fortune. Whatever they touch turns into gold. This makes one wonder whether men are after all puppets in the grip of an unseen fate. *Pūnkunranār* bemoans the inexorability of fate. He likens the hapless soul operated by destiny to a tiny boat in a mighty current which rolls away huge rocks. It is obvious to those who can see that man is not free.[44] Yet, it will not be far wrong to say that destiny is only another name for one's own deserts deserved by his own deliberate acts. It is called *Ūlvinai* for this reason.[45] It is not a metaphysical force subsistent in itself controlling and directing the course of human affairs arbitrarily. Valluvar's verses on *ūl* are inexplicable except on the hypothesis that man is a free agent choosing his course of action. He declares that even the so-called destiny could be thwarted by constant vigil and tireless effort.[46] To blame destiny for one's failures is the way of all idlers. Destiny is immaterial; planned and intelligent work with a mission is all-important. Hard work is the reply to the despotism of destiny. No action, however, is done in isolation. It presupposes an entire course of personal

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43. புகழும் மானமும் எடுத்து வற்புறுத்தலும். *Ahat.*, 41.

44. கல்பொருது இரங்கும் மல்லல்பேர்யாற்று நீர்வழிப்படூஉம்
புணைபோல் ஆருயிர் முறைவழுப்படூஉம்
Cp. *Kural*: 371–380.

45. வித்தும் அறவினையன்றே விழுத்துணை.
Again:
இக்கரை நின்று இவர்ந்து உக்கரை கொளல் அத்துணை புணை.
(*Puram*: 357.)

46. See *Kural*: 616, 618, 619, 620. See 619 and 1023 for the use of the word தெய்வம்.

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and social history, not to speak of a network of natural forces like heredity. One's own past largely decides one's present. In these circumstances, one's actions at any particular context may seem to be wholly determined. Plans go awry; hopes are thwarted. One may be tempted to attribute this unexpected turn of events to an overshadowing fate or destiny, not realisiug that one's own past has a lion's share in shaping one's current life. If one was free in the past to bring about the future, he should be free to determine the future now.[47] Seen in this light, the concept of destiny is essentially a moral, social and spiritual one because it places all the responsibility of making a world fit for living squarely on the individual. This is only an affirmation of the dignity of man, both in himself and in relation to others in society. This is the dynamic ethos of the *Kuraḷ*, *Tolkāppiam* and the *Puram*. All our acts are contingent. They could have been otherwise though, in some cases, they take place under such limiting conditions that they seem to be necessary. Acts depend upon the human will which can do or undo or do otherwise. The doctrine of *ūḷ* will make everything appear as determined including the will. It is an overall explanation of everything that happens and thus is no genuine explanation at all. A situation and its opposite alike can be accounted for as the work of destiny. Yet the very possibility of an opposite situation gives a lie to the doctrine of destiny because under its decree only one situation could ever take place. It can never be otherwise. The event that has happened, simply because it indeed in fact happened, cannot on that account be the only possibility. How else could the various possibilities even be conceived?[48] Michael

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47. *Kuraḷ* was certain that destiny is more than offset by effort. ஊழையும் உப்பக்கம் காண்பர். (620).

48. In reply to the challenge of Antony Flew (*New Essays in Philosophical Theology, 1955*) as to what would have to occur to constitute a disproof of the existence of God, R. M. Hare said that a religious belief expresses a *blik*, which is an unverifiable and unfalsifiable interpretation of one's experience. A paranoia who believes that everyone wants to murder him will count nothing as *disproof* of his conviction. On the contrary, he will consider every disproof as proof and think that the goodness of people towards him is just a facade to deceive him . Similar seems to be the case of those who believe in the pervasive power of *ūḷ*.

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Dummet in his "Bringing about the Past" (*Philosophical Review*, 1964) quotes a dilemma in favour of fatalism from the bombing of London during 1940. "Either you are going to be killed by a bomb or you are not. If you are, then any precautions you take will be ineffective. If you are not, all precautions you take are superfluous. Therefore, it is pointless to take precautions".

The dilemma is false because people do take precautions and are saved. If taking precaution by one is itself said to be fated, what kind of thing this fate is is beyond our understanding. If it were one with Providence, the Providence can work even without the medium of human agency. God might be said to be the cause of the inanimate world-order with some plausibility but in the realm of human actions where an action is preceded by a contemplation of alternatives, looking backwards and forwards, there is always the possibility of an action being otherwise than what it actually was. Man's actions do not obey mechanistic determinism. When a particular course of action has been chosen, it is said to be caused by that exercise of will. To be so caused is the expression of one's freedom; otherwise the act will not be one's own at all. Hence man's freedom of will means this free causing of acts. On occasions, one may not be doing what he could have. His freedom might have been restricted by certain overwhelming factors. Still, the fact remains that one could have acted otherwise, *left to himself*. Surely, freedom does not become non-existent because it is curtailed. It cannot be argued either that given the same set of conditions for an action, the act could not have been otherwise. This is a self-contradiction because if one has chosen differently certainly the act would have been different; but at least one of the conditions of the chosen act, the choice, would have been different. Then, the conditions would not have been the *same*.[49]

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49. Cp. C. A. Hampbell, "Is 'Free-Will' a Pseudo-Problem", *Mind*, 1951. When there is conflict between an inclination and duty, says Campbell, "I find that I cannot help believing that I can rise to duty and choose X; the "rising to duty" being effected by what is commonly called "effort of will". Quoted by John Hospers in his *An Introduction of Philosophical Analysis*, second edn., 1967, p. 325. Short of the ultimate solutions, the

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The *Puram* approaches the problem of evil in its own way. It has no doubt that man is essentially free He can counteract evil by a carefully planned action and choice of values and goals. Kayamanār, a sagely poet, addresses death thus: "O Death, you appear like a bolt from the blue, on a rampage devouring lives. But you will be disappointed in my king. He has already realized the utter temporality and evanescence of things. Hence, he has executed many a charitable act, done many a good." The implication of this statement is that though death is an inevitable evil, destroying the physical existence, it ceases to have the terror to one who has lived the most glorious life, personally and socially, of noble deeds.

Immortality is also survival in the memory of the posterity. This is called *Puhaḷ* in the *Kuraḷ* and *Puram*. The leaders of society valued being sung by poets. To be praised by a poet is to be immortalised. Nedunceliyan says in *Puram*: "If I did not defeat the enemey, let my country not be sung by poets!" Those who have the privilege of being recognised by poets deem it the greatest honour both in this world and in the next.[50] The poets themselves never condescended to praise the undeserving even though it meant loss of a precious fortune.[51] They spoke the truth at any cost. To live in fame is the truer immortality and survival than an eschatological condition in a paradise.

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question of moral freedom must have to be tackled only within the framework of human actions. It is safe to assume that man has freedom to choose though the choice may be limited. But, then, the limitation has no bearing onthe reality of the freedom of choice. Otherwise, the distinct feature of consciousness which physical entities lack will be rendered meaningless and its purpose will be left unexplained. Man is not a robot or an automaton. Even if he were, he would not know it. But the point is, man knows it, and would resist being named a robot. Herein lies precisely the freedom of man.

50. புலவர் பாடும் புகழுடையோர் விசும்பின்
வலவன் ஏவா வான ஊர்தி
சுய்துப என்ப தம் செய்வினைமுடித்து. (*Puram*: 27).
See *Kuraḷ*: 233, 234, 235, 238, 239. Also: 114.

51. See *Puram*; 148, 168, 375.

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There is another way indicated in the *Puram* to a life of felicity wherein the force of evil is reduced to nihil. Whether it be natural evil or a moral one, man can overcome their tragic impact through bypassing them. Good and evil do not arise due to external causes. Sufference of evil also is not caused externally. Death and destruction are the law of life. Hence, says Pūnkunranār, he does not get overjoyed by the sweetnesses of life, nor is he upset at the prospect of pain.[52] One should take them in his stride, without being committed to the pursuit of the one or to the prevention of the other. One should grow beyond good and evil. One does not, in this attitude, worship nor despise anyone, but preserves his peace in all predicaments. Eveything is equally, but nothing in particular is, dear. If good and evil are traced to past deeds, the wise man allows them to fruition in equanimity, with no preferences, and no fresh accumulation of moral potencies for the future is allowed to take place. The past blows over; the future is not built. This means that one faces the consequences of one's actions squarely and allows them to exhaust themselves but takes no fresh decisions. The exercise of freedom is abandoned and life is reduced to what the barest natural needs would demand. The limitations of the exclusive ego are pulled down and man as such merges into all-comprehending universality.

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52. With such people abroad, even the natural evil of old age is overcome. In reply to a question why he has not grieved in spite of his advanced age, Piśirāndiar says that it is because, above everything else, there are wise great men in his home-town who have conquered their senses.

(*Puarm*: 191.)

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CHAPTER IV

LOGIC AND EPISTEMOLOGY

Before one could construct a world-view to live by, one should also have a knowledge of the methods by which he arrived at conclusions. Not only one must know something; he must also know in addition that it is true and that it is true because it has been discovered by accredited instruments of knowing. One must be able to say *why* a certain belief of his is true. The criteria of truth must be laid down. It is by a self-conscious enquiry that the world of our experience given to the senses is examined.[1] The scope and limits of our knowledge must be settled before the validity of our knowledge claims is asserted. For this the various sources of knowledge must have to be listed. Between logic and epistemology, therefore, the sources of our knowledge and their claim to credibility are closely investigated; norms of truth and falsehood are ascertained.[2]

SKEPTICISM

Prior to investigation of the nature of true knowledge or the opposite of it, it is useful to consider the view that knowledge itself is impossible or that at least we can never be sure that we have attained it. Gorgias of Greece claimed that nothing exists; if it did, we could not know of it, and even if we knew it, we cannot communicate it to others. Only by abstaining from an inquiry into the real nature of things and taking the appearances as they are given could man attain genuine tranquillity of mind. A more philosophical statement of a methodological scepticism was formulated by Descartes in his

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1. சுவை ஒளி ஊறு ஓசை நாற்றம் என்றைந்தின்
வகை தெரிவான் கட்டே உலகு. *Kural* : 27.

2. Claims of truth and the reasons therefor constitute the *normative* or *justificatory* epistemology. The analysis of perceiving, understanding, weighing the evidence etc., of which one must be aware to claim truth for one's belief is called *descriptive* epistemology.

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Discourse on Method and in *Meditations* to sound the base of the foundational rock of indubitable knowledge. Knowledge according to Descartes must be characterised by certainty, an ideal that perhaps is well nigh impossible to attain. David Hume called into question the validity of the concepts of substance, causality and necessity which constitute knowledge.

Any knowledge to be real must, said Hume, have elements corresponding to impressions. The substance as the substratum of qualities must be either the content of sensation or reflection. It is, however, neither of these. Hence, the so-called substance is merely a collection of simple ideas fused in imagination with a label of a common name.

Causality shares a similar fate. There is nothing like necessity anywhere. All distinct ideas are separable but their constant conjunction is mistaken for necessity. Sequence is reality; consequence is imagination, aided by habit, custom and association. In a similar way, the external world is derived from the constancy and coherence of impressions, inclining the mind to the habit of finding uniformities amidst sheer successions. "The thought glides along the succession with equal felicity, as if it considered only one object; and thereforec onfounds the succession with identity". The imagination tends to wink at the gaps among the jerks of discrete impressions and takes them as one continuously same whole of an object, which is but a fond illusion.[3]

Though abstract reason, said Hume, cannot give us certainty, our natural propensities can. A positive philosophy is possible on the basis of habit of imagination, though not on the basis of demonstrative reason. It is psychology, not logic, that has explanatory power. Knowledge is explained more by the law of

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3. Yet Hume recognised a certainty in the demonstrative sciences. In algebra and arithmetic we have instances of this certainty, though our feeble faculties are not equal to the task of perceiving the certainty so much so that we are left with nothing but probability even here. Thus, skepticism of Hume seems to be total and complete. But some thinkers (Laing, Laird, Kemp Smith and Church) think, though, that Hume was a moderate skeptic.

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association which synthesises loose impressions into intelligible unity. Yet, when all is said and done, cognitive certainty is the first casualty in skepticism.

Both rationalists and empiricists aimed at certainty as the defining characteristic of knowledge. To say something is true is to say it is necessarily true in the substantive and non-trivial sense. Either the certainty is based on demonstrative reason or perception.[4] Some philosophers have, in order to find their balance in the jungle of philosophical scepticism, gone back to common sense reports as the most certain. G. E. Moore's "Proof of an External World" and "Defence of Common Sense" are cases in point. Commonsense philosophy goes hand in hand with "ordinary language", which J. L. Austin called the begin-all of philosophy: A great variety of complex situations are dealt with, not by obscure deviationist language of metaphysics, but by an understanding how ordinarily language is used, so that, it is said, much of skeptical puzzles could be dissolved.[5]

The skeptic's position has to be defended by arguments but this is already to grant the fact of knowledge. A sceptic cannot open his mouth without refuting skepticism thereby. If knowledge is not possible, how can there be a discussion as to its possibility?[6] Gilbert Ryle in his *Dilemmas* (1954) uses what is known as the argument from the polar concepts. There could be nothing illusory if there were not something real; nothing like doubt if there were not certainty; no counterfeit coins if there were no genuine

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4. A. J. Ayer said that unless something is certain, nothing can even be probable. Though eternal doubt borders on neurosis, doubt does not seem to be dispensable. Yet Ayer believes that certain basic propositions can be conclusively proved by a meaning rule of the language. Of course, one can misuse the language, but should not push the case for certainty too far to the level of being neurotic. See his *Philosophical Essays*, (1954), pp. 105 ff. Propositions of privately felt experiences are said to be 'incorrigible' that is, cannot be checked by others. And they are also indubitably certain.

5. Descartes thought that he found certainty in the knowledge of the self *Cogito ergo sum* is his famous formula. 'The doubter cannot be doubted' seems to be the most undoubted claim.

6. See *Theory of Knowledge*, D. W. Hamlyn, (1974), p. 51.

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ones. There is also an argument from paradigm cases. If a concept is to be deemed genuine, there must be instances to which the concept and the term could be applied as paradigms, with reference to which alone we explain a term. If the skeptic allows that the term "knowledge" has meaning, he must enable us to know what would count as knowledge. Since according to him there is no such thing as knowledge, this he cannot proceed to accomplish. Wittgenstein said in his *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) that where there is no possibility of being wrong, it is pointless to speak of knowledge. Knowledge, said A. J. Ayer in his *The Problem of Knowledge* (1956) has two notions as components: (1) being sure and (2) having the right to be sure.

Knowing something is to know it aright. To know a proposition is also to know it as true. In this sense, knowledge is different from belief, though it implies belief. To know that something is true will also imply that the evidences for believing what we do believe could be given. One need not have *all* the evidences that there are for believing in something but one must have adequate evidence. To expect complete evidence is to cry for the philosophical moon and which the skeptic will never tire of insisting on is the *strong* sense of the word 'know'. To be for all practical purposes satisfied with enough, though not sufficient, evidence for certainty, is to rest on the *weak* sense of the word 'know'. For the most part, we are content with the latter. If one stops for absolute certainty before entertaining belief, it may be that he never gets started at all in the direction of knowledge.

KNOWLEDGE AND TRUTH

Knowledge, as the foregoing remarks tend to show, is and must be true and valid, as distinguished from belief which is, before it is tested and proved true, neither true nor false.[7] But

7. A. P. Griffiths, in *Knowledge ond Belief* edited by him says that belief is that state of mind that is appropriate to truth. P. Geach in *Mental Acts* (1957) says that belief is a kind of mental saying. Gilbert Ryle in *Concept of Mind* (1949) said that belief is a disposition towards an act or talk. To Russell and Brentano, the content of a belief is a proposition which is an intentional object.

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yet, when one believes anything, he believes that it is a fact. Hence, a belief is necessarily a claim to truth though the claim may not be sustained, in which case it is false. Knowledge, then, may be said to be a belief that is also true: Error on this account is falsified belief.

But then, what are truth and error? Truth is a characteristic of proposition just as reality is of things.[8] When a proposition describes or reports the real state of affairs it is true. In other words, the proposition is true when it exactly corresponds to an existing state of affairs.[9] Wittgenestein in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* holds that elementary basic propositions correspond in some way, if they do not actually mirror, the structures of objects. Words here do duty for things. Propositions are pictures of reality. Austin wrote: "A statement is said to be true when the historic state of affairs to which it is correlated by the demonstrative conventions (the one to which it 'refers') is of a type with which the sentence used in making it is correlated by the descriprive conventions". He spoke of word-world connection which is of two kinds: (a) *descriptive conventions* which correlate words with the types of situation to be found in the world and (b) *demonstrative conventions* which correlate words with historic situations in the world. In effect, this would mean only correspondence with propositions and actual state-of-affairs.[10]

Truth, according to G. E. Moore,[11] is simple, unanalysable, intuitable property belonging to certain propositions, not to

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8. P. F. Strawson on "Truth", *Philosophy and Analysis* (1954) says that "true" is useful in confirming some statement already made. But this involves circularity because the confirming only is of the truth. (D. W. Hamlyn, *The Theory of Knowledge*, 1974, p. 114).

9. There may be difficulties in the word 'correspond' here. How can a proposition correspond to things one-to-one? Is it a 'picture' of the things? The picture-theory fails when our propositions are about concepts of which there can be no image or copy, as A. C. Ewing, in his *The Fundamental Questions of Philosophy* points out.

10. See D. W. Hamlyn: *The Theory of Knowledge*, p. 133–134.

11. G. E. Moore identifies a true proposition with reality. The true proposition does not merely correspond to reality. The truth that 'I exist' differs in no respect from the reality of "my existence". See his article on "Truth" in Baldwin's *Dictionary*.

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others, to which Russell also subscribed. The reason for this view is that it is not possible to get beyond the relations between the concepts to a reality which is said to correspond to them. The world is composed, therefore, only of such eternal and immutable concepts; and propositions relate them. What a true proposition does is that it predicates 'truth' of such a relation of concepts, and is a 'fact' or 'a reality'.[12]

Bertrand Russell held the view that the truth of atomic propositions in contrast to molecular propositions is determined by facts to which they refer.[13]

The main difficulties in the correspondence theory lie in the nature of the fact to which a belief is said to correspond and the method by which to know such a correspondence. In a sense, these two are mutually involved. The fact itself is to be experienced and should therefore be a judgement of a belief before a proposition about it could be said to correspond to it.[14] Ultimately we seem to be left only with beliefs or judgements. A fact is largely a matter of interpretation and judgement. Truth, on this account, does not lie ready-made to be discovered. Mind sees what it makes by its interpretation. It is rather the coherence of propositions which are the contents of judgements.[15]

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12. Moore sometimes says that there is no such thing as a proposition at all on the ground that in a false belief there is no proposition to be believed.

13. The molecular propositions are the truth-functions of atomic propositions.

14. Joachim in his *The Nature of Truth* has criticised the assumptions of the correspondence theory.

    The one-to-one correspondence is unsatisfactory. One point of a simple component of a complex cannot correspond to another. One point on the *nose* of a picture cannot correspond to that on the face of the real man. The picture as a whole may be said to represent the real man. Here the points in the picture and the real man correspond because of structural coherence.

15. Coherence theory of truth is advocated by idealists like Hegel and Bradley. Playing Berkeley to Schlick's Locke, Otto Neurath, the positivistic thinker, argued that sentences can be compared only with other sentences, not with the so-called facts or situations. The theory that

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The coherence theory says that there is no judgement which is wholly true unless it be a judgement about the whole of reality. The whole truth alone is wholly true. All truths less than the whole truth are conditional, said Bradley in his *Appearance and Reality*. Of course, it also follows from this that there is no total error anywhere, A partial vision of the whole truth may not be wholly true; yet it is not wholly false because it tells us about at least the parts of the whole. In this sense, all judgements in the everyday commerce of life are partial and hence are partly true. Errors, however, must be distinguished from illusions according to Bradley. Errors are inadequate understanding of the total reality which is always a system. Errors are even necessary to our being in the world and to suit the divergent aspects of our inconsistent finite lives. Every partial judgement gives us an appearance only. But yet, there is a convergence of these partial views in the order of reality. Illusions, on the contrary, arise when the partial judgements do not cohere among themselves. Illusions are thus a source of danger and disappointment, surprise and shock.[16]

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propositions like "tree being green" are non-mental logical entities and that these correspond to real facts of life, (which correspondence one should *immediately* see, not by an act of comparison) is rejected by Joachim. Nothing can be known without being interpreted and changed.

16. Coherence is not mere formal consistency. The latter is a static relation among fixed facts. But, coherence interpenetrates the related elements. Truth is a living and moving whole. Brand Blanshard in his *The Nature of Thought* holds that coherence theory of truth does justice to the ideal system of knowledge which all human thinking strives to achieve. Empiricism explains necessity away. Formalism confines necessity to logic and mathematics only. The idealist sees it as all-pervasive.

For statements about the past coherence is the only criterion. And in logic and mathematics, *a priori* is the paradigm of truth with all their necessity. However, there are certain difficulties in the theory. *A priori* coherence available in pure mathematics does not tell us anything about matters of fact. Further, there is no way to decide between two different, equally comprehensive systems. Where coherence obtains as in the deductive mathematical systems, it is at best only a *test* of truth, not the difinition. Coherent judgements must be true of something.

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There is yet another definition of truth which is the one offered by the pragmatists. Truth is what works. Peirce insisted that signs and symbols must result in rational conduct. This has also a social import. As James put it, every theory must lead to consequences. Materialism is false because it offers no promise for the future. The theory of freewill pragmatically means novelties in the world. This is the importance of 'tychism" which demands novelty. Truth is not a copy of reality, the pragmatists would urge, an imperfect second edition, a pale and pointless replica, unless, of course, in so far as it helps us to deal with reality in an effective way. Truth, being the best for us to have in the due course, is a sub-species of goodness. Again, James argued that truth is a process, not a static property attached passively to propositions. It is what happens to an idea. Schiller said that truth is man-made. Experience, said John Dewey, is a non-reflective way of meeting a situation, like eating a meal, admiring a picture, building a garage. A thing likewise is *res*, an affair, an occupation like conducting a political campaign, getting rid of an overstock of canned tomatoes. It is events that constitute experience, not static substances. Thinking is inquiry to get over a problem. Knowledge is successful practice and consequent satisfaction of the scientists. In reality, a proposition is neither false nor true, but only effective or ineffective, relevant or irrelevant. Warranted assertability is the right designation, not truth, of judgements. We are warranted in asserting them because they lead us to the ideal towards which science carries us.[17] Philosophy is not mere witnessing spectator. Experience throws challenges and interrogations. We modify the world when

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This can be only correspondence which is ascertained perhaps by coherence. Again, being partly true is not the same as being part of the truth. Moreover, a body of propositions may be coherent and yet may be false. Coherence even as a test fails here. Besides, idealists move from assertions about what is truth to assertions about what is true. They identify, in other words, what is perceived with the perception of it.

17. George Sorel in his *Reflection on Violence* (1908) attacked "Scientism" as a conceptualist way of thinking of social action, as opposed to the pragmatic way.

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we want to, not merely write reports on it. Philosophy is both a "physician of culture" and a logician. Philosophy is nothing if it were not instrumentalist.[18]

After this bird's-eye view of knowledge and truth in the Western thought, let us examine the theories of knowledge and error in the *Kuraḷ*, *Puram* and *Tolkāppiam*. Needless to say that a systematic academic account of this matter cannot be expected in them. We must construct the implicit views from the suggestions thrown *passim*, however vague and indefinite they may be. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that where in isolated places these works do express any view, they do so with a ring of conviction and certitude that conceal a line of demonstrative reasoning which it is not very difficult to discover.

In the *Kuraḷ*, the nature of truth and error has been determined and it is obvious to those who look into it that it has done so on the grounds of certain critieria or norms. The common sense world of the sense-experiences is not taken for granted. It is hinted that the world is not what it appears to the senses. The reports of the senses must be thoroughly examined. Truth is obtained as the result of an inquiry.[19]

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18. There are some recent accounts of truth which may be indicated here in passing, Alfred Tarski views truth as a property of sentences; only it is the semantic, not grammatical, property, because the sentence designates what is in fact the case. "New York is a large city is true" is a metalinguistical sentence about the sentence "New York is a large city". Tarski seems to favour the correspondence theory of truth. F. P. Ramsey says that the word "true" is redundant. "It is true that Ceasar was murdered' means no more than that Ceasar was murdered. This is known as the redundancy theory of truth. Here, truth need not be the property of a statement.

19. Subjective idealists both in the East (Vijñānavāda Buddhists) and the West (George Berkeley) have argued that the "world" is given to us only through sense-impressions and as such we do not know anything about a world apart from and independent of the sense-impressions. The so-called world is only a bundle of sensa-impressions which are private to the individual. The externality of the world is illusion. The world is a function of consciousness. Representative realists (John Locke and the Sautrāntikas) have tried to show that though the objects of the world are not *directly* known to exist, yet they could be inferred from the fact

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Parimelalagar commenting on the *Kuraḷ* (27) elaborates what is essentially the principles of the Sāṅkhya system. This stanza in the *Kuraḷ* stands for philosophical wisdom that arises as a result of an enquiry into the nature of the world and the soul.

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of sense-experiences which must have been caused by them. Kant said that, though it is true we do not directly know the objects as they are in themselves, it is still true that the things-in-themselves *cause* the sense-manifold which is the raw material of knowledge. Knowledge, however, is constructed on the basis of certain *a priori* framework like the categories of understanding and forms of intuition which is imposed on the unrelated sense-manifold to shape them into conceptual knowledge. Knowledge starts from experience but it does not originate there. Yet, the things-in-themselves are we do not know what. Mind legislates to nature as to the laws it should obey. Scientific knowledge is largely a matter of the contribution of the mind. We find in the world what we have ourselves put there. To G. E. Moore, on the contrary, the reality of the world outside the knowing mind is instinctively known. The sense-datum like the impression of the colour of an object is one and identical with the object as its constitutive part. Moore, like Russell, says that when inference plays a part in our judgement, it opens the gates to error. It is only in perception, direct and unmixed with mental constitutions and inferences, that we are face to face with reality with no possibility of error. When I see a colour, there could be no error in saying that I see a colour. But when I think that it is blue or black, there is a chance of committing a mistake. Sense-impression is knowledge by acquaintance.

This view Moore modifies later in his personal statement in *Contemporary British Philosophy* (Vol, II), because when a drunkard sees double, it is perplexing on the earlier account of Moore how both the data could be identical with the object without being identical with themselves. Matter, he now says, is a set of "hypothetical facts". If certain conditions are fulfilled, then, I will be perceiving sense-data of this kind called a hand. Anyhow, Moore is puzzled as to how he could relate the sense-data to the object, and the sense-data themselves. (See *The Philosophy of G. E. Moore* (Library of Living Philosophers Series, p. 637).

Bertrand Russell admitted that a real table, if there were one, is not immediately known; only certain sensory impressions of the socalled table are so known. But even these are not properties of the table whose very existence is problematic. What we can be certain about is ourselves and our experiences. The world is not what it appears to be. It is a construction out of our various experiences of it. Subsequently in his neutral monism, he holds that mind and matter themselves are abstractions from the neutral particulars. My experience is as much natural as

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The world is analysed into twentyfive categories, one among them being the soul which is the principle of consciousness and the rest of them being the primordial matter and its evolutes which include the mind also.

It is the Prakṛti that is the primordial matter that evolves and being constituted of the three qualities of sattva, rajas, and tamas, gives rise to knowledge, action and inertia. Prakṛti cannot move except in the proximity of the soul (*puruṣa*), which is essentially passive and pure. This happens just like the movement of the iron in the neighbourhood of the magnet.

The sense-organs and the experiences that they occasion are the play of Prakṛti. The soul is in itself free but once it is mixed up with Prakṛti it revolves in the cycle of birth and death, experiences pleasure and pain. The function of the senses, the experience of the world through them and the consequent pleasure

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the object experienced. A sensation thus is the object, a constituent of the physical world and part of what physics is concerned with. The experiencing person is a linguistic convenience and is, in satisfaction of the demands of grammar, a fortuitous assumption. Perception is a physical event happening in the brain which is only a cross-section of neutral particulars as much as the object that is so perceived,

Empiricism developed into logical empiricism so called because it arrives at empiricist conclusions by logical analysis, rather than by psychological analysis, of propositions. In due course of time, what we are left with are only logical or linguistic entities. The phenomenalism is of the language now.

This rapid survey of some of the leading ideas in the enquiry into the ontological or logical status of the physical world *vis-a-vis* the percipient will reveal how complex the problem of the world is. Vaḷḷuvar put it pithily as an apothegm that the ontology of the world is apparent to one who understands by investigation the nature of our sense-perceptions. சுவை, ஒளி, ஊறு, ஓசை, நாற்றம் என்றைந்தின் வகை தெரிவான் கட்டே உலகு.

He does this for twin purposes of (1) fixing the ontological status of the world in relation to our perceptual experiences and (2) to ethically equip the individual by the control of the senses.

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and pain are all the work of matter; they do not belong to souls that are ever pure.[20]

Kuraḷ distinguishes between truth and falsehood as rather the properties of propositions. When a statement does not accord with what is in one's mind, it becomes falsehood. This only means that a statement is false if it does not report the actual state of affairs or situation.[21]

It is a mistaken belief to take the evanescent as the external.[22] A belief is erroneous when it is contradicted later on by the knowledge of the real fact. That which comes into being in time will disappear in time.[23] What is thus subject to temporal change and inconstancy cannot be real. A statement about the unreal cannot be true either. Statements made in dream about the events in dream are as false as the events are unreal. A true statement is one that corresponds to reality. Conversely when one thing is mistaken for another, the resulting belief is an error of judgement. To treat the body as oneself is one such error.[24]

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20. The evolution of the world according to Sāṅkhya proceeds on the following lines: Prakṛti, the uncaused primordial substance, first develops into *mahat* or the principle of cosmic intellect which is the basis of *all* intellects; thence, *ahaṁkāra* which is the principle of egoity or self sense; thence, the evolution takes place in three directions according to the *sāttvic*, *rājasic* and *tāmasic* qualities of Prakṛti. There arise from the *sāttvic* self-sense, the five sense-organs, five motor-organs, and the mind; from the *tāmasic* self-sense, the five subtle elements of smell, taste, sight, touch and sound arise which further develop into the five gross elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether which in turn produce the world by proportionate combination.

21. See 293, 295 in particular.

22. Parimelaḷagar gives the illustration of the mirage and the rope-snake and says that some thinkers treat the world on the model of these examples. Perhaps the reference is to Advaita.

23. Where the illustration of the theatre is given. When the performance is over, the crowd that thickly thronged disperses.

24. This error is due to ignorance, says Parimelaḷagar. This means that if all the necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge are present, no error is possible.

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An error is thus a positive judgement where not only is it that one does not know the real but believes the opposite of it. There are both non-observation and mal-observation here.

From this it follows that the *Kural* distinguished between belief and knowledge. A belief as it arises is not yet known to be true or false though it is potentially so. That it is true or false is only ascertained after the right knowledge with regard to the same object has arisen. If the belief is true, it is confirmed, if it were false it is contradicted.

The true belief, though known to be true later, has been true even earlier than it was so known. It *was* true even before it was known to be so. So is the false belief. The pragmatic verification makes *known* the truth or falsity of a belief. But the belief itself as it arises is true or false already. Either it corresponded to facts or not. In other words, the conditions that produce the belief produce at the same time its truth-value also,[25] though, of course, we might not be aware of this fact. However, if we assume that it is the function of knowing, unless it is interrupted, to reveal objects as they are, then all our perceptions are veridical even as they arise and would require no external verification. When the eyes and the mind, for instance, are transparently pure and receptive without obstructions like disease and psyschological prejudices, we can be certain that what they

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25. In Indian thought, there are those who hold that the same conditions produce both the belief and its truth-value and those who differ. The Naiyāyikas think that a belief is strictly neutral before it is made true or false. This position resembles that of the pragmatists to whom a proposition is validated and made true when it is verified. The Advaitins believe that any belief is always a true belief or knowledge. False belief is a contradiction in terms. The conditions that produce the belief produce the truth of that belief also. A belief is already true. Nothing can be *made* true. Either a belief is true or no. A belief stands the test of verification or it 'works' *because* it is true. If at any time a belief is false, it is due to conditions that have obstructed the operation of the factors of truth. Truth is natural; falsity is exceptional.

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report to us is true and, what is more, *any* knowledge which so arises will be at the same time self-evidently true.[26]

If knowledge were not self-evident, by no means of an external test could we possibly know it. The test of non-contradiction will be practically useless because non-contradiction for all time is not observable. What is not contradicted at the present moment may be contradicted in the future. Nor is coherence a satisfactory test for the reason that at least one knowledge is to be known independent of any test to be valid. Coherence with anything which itself requires a test for its validity becomes a barren criterion. Again, even falsities may perfectly cohere. Practical efficiency, too, does not serve the purpose well here because even false things as in dream apparently work so much so that we cannot argue from practical efficiency to the condition of truth. Hence, knowledge is self-evident. If anything, it is error that is discovered by tests external to the conditions of knowledge.[27]

There are categorical statements in the *Kuraḷ* that leave one in no doubt as to what criterion of truth Vaḷḷuvar preferred.

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26. We can put down the Indian positions in a scheme: Truth or falsity of beliefs are produced and ascertained by conditions other than those that produce those beliefs (Nyāya); are produced and ascertained by the same conditions (Sāṅkhya); truth is produced and ascertained externally while falsity is produced and known intrinsically (Buddha); truth is produced and known intrinsically while falsity is just the opposite. (Advaita and Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṁsā).

    Among the Indian philosophies, the Naiyāyikas and the Buddhists insist on practical efficiency as the *test* of truth, Correspondence is the *nature* of truth.

27. "If knowledge were not transitive, if it were not in direct contact, joined with reality, then all our tests, coherence, correspondence, and the rest, would be worthless", said L. A. Reid in his *Knowledge and Truth*. Russell treated knowledge by acquaintance as immediately self-evident. The sense-data are self-certifying according to G. E. Moore. In Advaita, *nirvikalpapratyakṣa* which is practically the same as indeterminate preception of sense-datum is self-evident, where there is no possibility of error at all. Even some of the Naiyāyikas, though they never admitted an

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A belief is true when it describes reality as it is. Otherwise it is distortion and hence false.[28] The function of knowledge is fact-finding and discovery and not creation or construction.[29] The object is prior to knowledge. Knowing mind is not in any way privileged to dictate its own terms to the object. Valluvar believes obviously in the realistic doctrine that knowing is an external relation between a knowing organism and the objects which are part of the natural order. Objects are external and independent of consciousness.

This is not to deny that there are occasional errors.[30] But this itself is proof that more often than not our ordinary perceptions are true. Otherwise there will be no possibility of the distinction between truth and error and even correction of error will be unthinkable.

Again, while ordinary perceptions are valid, their significance in the total scheme of things may not exactly be grasped.[31] The meaning of existence may not be apparent to the first look. But this does not preclude the ordinary perception being true. It may be that we have access only to finite truths. Perhaps we have ordinarily no philosophical perspective of the whole truth. In the light of a larger understanding, things may possibly take on hitherto unsuspected shades of significance. But this is a question of meaning that things have for us. As brute uninterpreted data of perceptions, even the finite partial perceptions are each one of them *wholly* true, as Bertrand Russell rightly urged against the monists. Such as it is, the dualism of the knower and the known is invariable and necessary for any phenomenon

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indeterminate perception, in the strict sense, conceded self-consciousness as immediate and self-evident.

28. 351.

29. 357.

30. H. H. Price distinguished between phenomenological and causal arguments from illusion. The first is the position where illusory experience does not differ *as* experience from the veridical one.

See his *Perception*, New York, 1950.

31. *Kural*: 353, 354.

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of knowledge. In this matter, the *Kural* - would accept the deliverances of experience. Things are as they appear and what common sense believes on instincts is largely true. There is no reason why we should be skeptical at every turn and suspect treachery in every report of the senses.[32] Metaphysical idealism is not incompatible with empirical realism. The empirical may not be the ultimate. Nevertheless, it is for all practical purposes a public world of knowledge and activity. Within the system of the everyday world, the externality of objects to mind can never be denied. As such correspondence will be the most acceptable definition of truth to Valluvar. The object is ordinarily known as it is.[33] Error arises consequently when an object is known as it is not.[34]

Ever in an error, there is an object at the time of its occurrence. The inviolable principle is that no knowledge, however erroneous it may be, can arise without some content. Knowledge is always of something other than itself; it is transitive and intentional. The most freakish of perceptions must also have a content of its own.[35]

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32. There is an interesting verse (850) which will bear quotation. உலகத்தார் உண்டென்பது இலலென்பான், வையத்து அலகையா வைக்கப்படும். Śaṅkara says that there is no question of illogcality in what is seen. *na hi dṛṣṭe anupapannaṁ nāma.*

33. *Kural*: 355, 357.

34. *Ibid.*: 351, 352. The Naiyāyikas say that knowledge is *tadvati tatprakāraka-jñāna* while error is just the opposite. Śaṅkara will state the same in a slightly different way. Error according to him is *atasmiṁs-tad-buddhiḥ*. A distorted perception which attributes characteristics to the object which do not really belong to it is error.

35. Samul Alexander said that error is misreading. It does have a reference in the world but not where it should be. Bosanquet fell that in error something that is there pretends to be something else. Like a false counterfeit coin, it does not have significance which it claims. A. C. Ewing thought that error is an unsuccessful cognising of objects. W. P. Montague wrote that illusions result from physical or peripherally physiological distortions of the real object underlying. E. B. Holt said that errors are contradictions that belong objectively to the physical order of things. They are not subjective since to the pan-objectivist

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In the *Puram*, general truths are formulated on the basis of evidences. For instance, the universal fact of change without exception has been embodied in a law.[36] Truth (உண்மை) is sharply distinguished from falsity (மாயம்).[37] Delusion and non-discrimination (மருள் and மயக்கம்) are mentioned as worthy of being transcended.[38] Uttering what is not a fact is falsehood (பொய்). Truth (மெய்) is a statement about what is.[39] Correspondence is certainly the definition of truth. When a belief is entertained without this correspondence it is bound to be contradicted. Men are sometimes in delusion and such a delusion is removed by knowledge alone. Knowledge alone is the contradictory of error. If the real is ever changeless, the truth is ever uncontradicted as it represents the real. The epistemological follows the ontological, not the other way about as the "Copernican Revolution" of Kant would have us believe.[40]

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like him nothing in fact could be subjective. Wittgenstein gave an argument that language depends on rules which are subject to public check. This means that any private sensation could be named only within an already established public language. As such there could be nothing that is subjective, It follows that error has and must have some objective reference. If we apply this to error, some (Sydney Shoemaker, for example), suggest that that the majority of perceptions are correct is a necessary truth on the ground that to suppose what we see, for example, as red is not so is to rob the concept of redness of any point of application.

36. 28.

37. 366.

38. 362.

39. 148; cp. மீண்டும் வாழ்தல் வேண்டிப் பொய் கூறேன்; மெய் கூறுவல். (136). See also 166. There are people who preach a false gospel and make people believe that it is true. Such imposotrs are exposed by the authentic prophets. Lie is a pretender to truth.

40. *Puram*: 2, 3. A chieftain is said to be incomparably greater than even the sun because the sun, among other defects of it own, changes frequently its position (8). Constancy is somehow a better value. This applies to propositions. Even if the earth falls asunder, the word does not change. நிலம் பெயரினும் நின் சொற்பெயரல் (3). If the word is not kept, it is untrue. It does not bring about the state of affairs which it announced it would.

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When people commit an error or labour under an illusion, they hardly are aware of it.

A false belief continues to be held till it is shown to be false. (Incidentally, this is a positive proof that a belief has a reference outside itself to which it is accountable). Hence a belief is and must be taken to be true till we have any contrary instance to disprove it. A falsity is thus shown up by its contradictions, subjectivity and emptiness of content. This follows from the very nature of our knowledge. Knowledge is the revelation of the object. If it fails in this function, it has to be traced to some retardation exercised from without. Thus it is that till a belief is contradicted by reality or till the retardation obstructing the natural course of knowledge is removed, what is reported by our senses must be taken to be true. When we do not do this, we are suspending our judgement and are supposed to be in doubt. In science, one may try to test a theory repeatedly, treating it as no more than a probability. But in life a person has to act on what he believes. He cannot be eternally in doubts. *Puram* is fully aware of these difficulties as is evident from the way in which it uses the terms like *maruḷ* or *māyam*. The need to warn the unregenerate people against certains delusions arises because they are not aware of the fact. The only test by which to identify an error is by its contradictedness. An error is in theory contradictable. The nature of truth, of course, is correspondence to facts which ensures its uncontradictedness.

This contradictedness can take place by dint of pragmatic failure of error to lead to success. Sooner or later, a false belief is very likely to come up against blind walls putting things in a mess. Pragmatism is not altogether unknown to these early Tamil poet-philosophers. In the *Kuraḷ*, all knowledge should end in the achievement of the goal, whether it be spiritual well-being or rational conduct. Knowledge equips man to face the problems of life. It is a bulwark against surprises and shocks. It gives us an understanding of the world and an attunement with it.[41] Right knowledge is the only means to felicity both in the

41. See 421–430. Also 2.

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spiritual and secular senses.[42] This applies even to words. Volumes of useless verbiage are more pernicious than even false statements. As John Dewey said, all education is both liberal and vocational. Liberal education teaches us what is good or better, while vocational education trains us to achieve it.[43] Perhaps this is the reason that 'letter' and 'number' are considered the twin boons of education in the *Kural*.[44] Valluvar has indeed formulated a whole educational theory of learning and action. An education is a waste if it did not put the power of effective action in the recipient to surmount the obstacles. The success and satisfaction that knowledge brings in its wake must be those felt by a scientist. Knowledge on this account is a tool of inquiry.[44a] It is not mere witnessing or contemplation. Its essence is action. Correspondence of knowledge to facts means that it deals with them effectively, not that it is a passive photograph of reality. Knowledge is prospective rather than retrospective. It is a function of being.

In the *Puram*, Neduncelian says that a philosopher should rule and guide the state policy.[45] The educated man, though low in social origin, is superior to the uneducated though socially privileged.[46] The reason for this is that education and knowledge are the instruments of successful action. The moral and material values of life are secured only by means of proper education.[47] Not only the principles of life are adumbrated but also the ways to realize them in the conduct of life are laid down.[48].

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42. 351–360.
43. 391.
44. 392.
44a. See 515, 516, 517.
45. ஒரு குடிப்பிறந்த பல்லோருள்ளும்
மூத்தோன் வருக என்றாதவருள்.
அறிவுடையோனாறரசும் செல்லும். 183. See also 187.
46. கீழ்ப்பால் ஒருவன் கற்பின்
மேற்பாலொருவனும் அவன்கட்படுமே. (183)
47. அறமும் பொருளும் இன்பமும் மூன்றும்
ஆற்றும் பெரும நின் செல்வம். (28) See also 31.
48. அறத்தாறு நுவலும் பூட்கை மறத்தின். (9)

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The civilization that *Puram* depicts is one of lofty idealism, practical efficiency and robust vitality. A refined philosophical consciousness of the meaning of life goes harmoniously hand in hand with the down-to-earth sense of the factual realities. Economic affluence and professional excellence were never at a discount. The problems of life were more than amply met by their scheme of values cleverly enshrined in the day-to-day conduct. Existence was not perplexing puzzle or a meaningless monotony. It was vigorous and zestful, purposive and joyous. Man was at home on this planet. Pain and sorrow had their share but man of the *Puram* culture had built-in safeguards to absorb the shocks of life and sublimate them into opportunities. Nature abounds both in terrors and bounties. To turn them to best advantage was the cultural genius of *Puram*.

We have ample evidence in the *Puram* of flourishing arts and sciences, whether it be peaceful occupation of agriculture[49] or adventure of navigation or overseas expedition,[50] textile technology[51]

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49. See *Puram*: 120, 289. Every inch of land was cultivated:
ஒருபிடி படியும் சீறிடம் ஏழகளிறு புரக்கும் நாடு கிழவோயே. (40)

50. 66, 126. Overseas colonies were established on far-flung military expeditions. (9, 18).

51. 383, 392, 393, 390, 398. Cotton was used for clothing. The texture was extremely fine so as to look like a screen of smoke (புகை விரிந்தன்ன பொங்குதுகில்) with the softness of fresh bloom (திருமலரன்ன புதுமடி or the cast-off skin of a snake (பாம்புரியன்ன). Over the cloth, beautiful women adorned themselves with leaves and flowers artistically woven into garments (61, 248, 340, 341). Burnished gold and precious stones and pearls were used in making ornaments like necklace, earrings, anklet, bracelet etc. *Tāli* was a married woman's insignia (126, 218). Pearl-diving was a familar avocation (377). Gold-mining was well-known industry (377). Smithery (218), carpentry, pottery and laundering were day-to-day arts (311). Culinary art was at a refined stage. A variety of dainty dishes were part of the menu (104, 215, 328, 335, 364, 381). Fishery was a profession. Salt industry was flourishing. Trade seems to be essentially barter (83, 380). International trade and commerce with countries beyond the seas were normal (66, 126). Irrigation was planned (68). Taxation was part of political economy. Wise methods of taxing were designed (184). Strategic warfare was perfected. The

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or civil engineering, art of music, dance and painting or the art of love and home-making, military skill or irrigation, trade and commerce or political administration, literature or religion, ethics or astronomy. This is proof enough to show that knowledge and truth in the *Puram* were never abstracted from the immediate concerns and commitments of life. On the contrary, they were the tools to make the world fit for civilized and integrated living.

SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE

What we claim to know presupposes the methods of knowing. Truth of what one believes is determined by the accredited means of knowledge. Knowledge is only the investigation of what we believe by established evidences.[52]

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armies knew when to advance, when to withdraw, how to by-pass and outflank the serried ranks of the enemy. Tempting the invader was an accepted strategy (259, 301). Rewards for outstanding gallantry were instituted (287). Elephants and horses were integral part of the army. Disciplined naval force operated on scientific lines gave power over the high seas. (66, 126, 382). The soldiers stuck to guns at formidable risks. War was waged normally under certain moral principles. Attacking an enemy when he has gone into hiding in fear was taboo (36). Generally, war was among the equals. Women, children, the infirm, the sick and the old were removed to safety during times of war, though occasional cruelty towards the defeated people was not unknown.

Kingship went by the law of primogeniture (75, 79). Political government was on a high ethical plane (185). Heavy taxation was deemed a political stigma (75, 184). There were assemblies of learned and wise men to advise the king (39, 55, 58, 266). The cities were planned by able architects (198). The palaces were equipred with secret gadgets to attack the invader (177). Astronomy as a science was well developed. Stars and planets were identifed (24, 229, 392). Predictions were made on the basis of the positions of stars. Kūḍalūr Kiḷār predicted the death of the king seven days ahead.

Harp and flute were played (281). Vocalists were popular (291). Dance was encouraged by kings. (10 , 221), Mārpittiār compares a house to a beautiful picture.

52. Indian philosophers have used the dictum: *pramāṇaiḥ arthaparikṣṇam* (investigation of what we claim to know by the accredited instruments

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Such evidences vary in number. Materialists in India and elsewhere admit sense-perception alone as evidence. Seeing is believing. Anything that is unexperienceable in terms of sensory observation is a metaphysical myth. Logical positivism in the West pinned its faith in verifiability as the criterion of meaning of propositions of which knowledge is constituted. What possible experience would settle the issue between a theist asserting the existence of God and the other denying it? Wittgenstein wrote in his *Tractatus* that to understand a proposition is to know what is the case if it is true. Rudolf Carnap said that all scientific propositions have ultimately to be tested by reference to experience. They are records of direct experience. A: J. Ayer ruled out by his strong verification all but "basic" propositions. This is the direction empiricism has taken where either perception or sense-datum language was the basic source.

A materialism, if it wanted to deny the possibility of metaphysics must have to be empiricist. To be sure, perception is the most fundamental source or court of appeal in any claim to knowledge though every knowledge need not arise from perception alone. In India, the Nyāya held the view, which was in principle accepted by every other school of philosophy, that perception is the primary source of knowledge. Inference depends on perception for its general propositions; comparison for its similarities; verbal testimony for the words; presumption for the facts to be explained; non-perception for the locus of the absent object. Again, we may call into question the conclusions of these various other sources with the result that we are eventually obliged to take perception as unchallengeably certain. Such an immediate certitude can belong only to perceptions, the elements of which must somehow taken to be self-evident. No further test need be asked for in their case.[53] In fact, immediacy is the one sole

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of knowledge or *mānādhīnā meyasiddhih* (the object is determined by the methods of knowing) Śaṅkara says that the possibility or impossibility of anything is determined. not *a priori*, but by a set of proofs. Logic is called in India as *ānvīkṣikī* the science of second intentions.

53. The Buddhists have defined perception as unmixed with any conception and as therefore unerring. It is a moot question how such a bare,

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defining characteristic of perception, not the sense-object contact. This is what H. H. Price calls "immediacy of assumption". There are cases of intuition which are non-sensory. Clairvoyance and telepathy will be of this type.

Indian thought has thoroughly appreciated the empiricist standpoint but it was not prepared to admit that perception is the only means of knowing. It is the starting point and may be the last resort as evidence. Yet that can hardly constitute knowledge which is conceptual network of relations. Perception gives us the facts, not the complex relations in which facts stand to each other. The general laws and principles that govern the facts are not perceived by the senses. There is much more in

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unrelated and unconceptualised sense-datum can be described or assimilated to any system of knowledge. Those who hold the theory of innate ideas like the European rationalists thing that there is even at the primitive level of perception, ideas about the world. In recent times. Noam Chomsky seems to hold a similar view, (*Cartasin Linguistics*, New York, 1966) Kant thought that perceptions without conceptions are blind while conceptions without perceptions are empty, thus making a compromise between rationalist and empiricist accounts of knowledge. What the Buddhists have assumed is that all conceptions are superstructures raised on the basic atomic sensations which are discrete and particular. What was not understood by them is that sensation is not perception which involves judgement. Interpretative and constructive activity of the mind is at work from the moment sense-contact with the world starts. Raw materials should not be confused with the knowing act which is nothing if not judging, though the act of judging to begin with may be very elementary and primitive. The Naiyāyika had the insight to understand this. Of course, one need not judge at all. In that case a merest awareness, not of any object in particular, results but that is hardly the kind of perception that we speak of. In a true sense, thought and the world arise together. Śaṅkara discovered this fact and brought it under his theory of mutual superimposition, which, he said was beginningless and natural. He was, however, aware of the distinction between the uninterpreted sense-datum and the perception of it. He knew that even to be aware of a bare sense datum is to recognise it as such. Seeing is not vacuous staring. But this is to introduce already differentiations in what is seen. Yet all particularised knowledge must have started from an initial indeterminacy where no conceptual work has yet figured.

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the world than what meets the eye. For instance, empiricist assertion that what is perceived alone is real is itself not a matter of empirical observation. It is a derived generality, a product of conceptual thinking. To perceive is one thing; to understand is another. The latter is to grasp the meaning or significance which is more universal than particular. Thought can never remain in isolated particulars. It can never rest until it finds the plan or the pattern, the sense and the significance of what is given. The given is not its own explanation. It is only an instantiation of what underlies it. It is in fact made possible by virtue of a law that governs it. Hence perception points to something beyond the facts as their ground. All facts are instances of laws. It is for this reason that perception can never settle all the doubts and disputes though it is the only source of factual data. What the data reveal when interpreted by the canons of reason could alone be entitled as knowledge. Even a so-called 'datum' is a highly vague term. It conceals much that is part of an interpretative reason.[54]

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54. Gilbert Ryle in his *Concept of Mind* criticises the sense-datum theory. The theory rests on the logical howler of assimilating the concept of sensation to that of observation. The assumption is made that observation entails sensation and is reinterpreted as 'observing entails sensing sense-data' sense-data being momentary looks, whiffs etc. But as 'sensing' is merely a pompous word for 'seeing' or 'observing', this means that observing entails observing sensations which is absurd. It involves an infinite regress. And having a sensation is not observation. Moreover, the sense-datum theory of perceptual relativity fails because it involves talking of 'sensing' an elliptical sense-datum, that is, seeing the elliptical look of a round dish, for example. But we cannot see looks any more than we can eat nibbles or smell whiffs.

A. J. Ayer and G, A. Paul developed the Alternative Language Thesis by which they held that the various philosophies of perception are not theories that explain facts but are simply alternative languages to express better the facts over which there is agreement. Professor Malcolm was satisfied with empirical certainty as logical certainty in perceptions is an impossible ideal. It is interesting to note that Indian thinkers (Nyāya and Mīmāṁsā) held the view that the so-called indeterminate perception of the bare sense-datum differs from the determinate one in so far as it is not verbalised. The Grammarian in India believed that there could be

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A careful thinker like Bertrand Russell wrote in his *The Problems of Philosophy:* "The real table, if there is one, *is not immediately* known to us at all, but must be an inference from what is immediately known". What is immediately known are the sense-data. But Russell was not sure whether these sense-data belong to the 'table'. That there is a table is only an instinctive belief. One thing about a physical object which we can know is that it is not what it seems, said Russell. Edmund Husserl describes the phenomenon of consciousness as the apprehension of meanings. The datum is only that with which anyone means. In addition there are the factors of the sense of this meaning and the meaning of something· What is given to consciousness is alone the fact. Immanual Kant, it is well known, constituted an object out of sense-manifold by the application of *a priori* categories. Still earlier, while John Locke left the substratum of the object to be inferred through the ideas, Berkeley reduced the object to a bundle of sense-qualities.

It is then exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to say what an object or a fact is.[55] Against this background, we now proceed to show what *Puram* has to say about the sources of knowledge.[56]

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no thought without language. Linguists in recent times say that all sense-datum is only sense-datum language.

55. While the idealists like Bradley think that facts are modified by the relation of being known, realists like R. B. Perry show that simple entities which are ultimate can never be implied by anything *because* they are simple and for the same reason are not dependent on consciousness which analyses complex into the simple but stands helpless before simples, simply accepting them as they are. Even mental states may be independent of consciousness. There may be, for instance, consciousness without self-consciousness.

56. While the materialistic empiricists accept perception alone as a means of knowledge (and some of them grudgingly concede a place for inference, to be sure), Buddhists accept perception and inference, the Śāṅkhyas accept perception, inference and testimony; the Vaiśeṣikas admit perception, inference, intuitive knowledge and remembrance. The Nyāya accepts perception, inference, comparison and verbal testimony; the Prābhākara Mīmāṁsakas add presumption as the fifth; the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṁsakas and the Advaita Vedantins accept non-cognition as the sixty. Other sources

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In a rebuttal of materialism, the philosophers of *Puram* refuse to accept perception as the only proof, though it is a very important or even primary evidence for our knowledge of the world. Seeing is not believing. If the world and the things in it are accepted, as common sense empiricism would dictate, as they appear *prima facie* to the senses, it will be a disastrous distortion of the truth leading to perdition.

Not only goodness and knowledge, but also the worldly pleasures take leave of the person who trusts the senses. An uncritical acceptance of sensory reports will blind him to deeper meanings. He will miss the wood for the trees.[57] The world deserts him who mistakes the appearance for reality.[58]

Yet, perception is a very important source of knowledge. What the true nature of the world and our life in it is is understood only by those who have the sharp faculties of observation. The sound philosophy of life that has been developed in the *Puram* is based on both acute observation and astute analysis. Even when the *Puram* deliniates the world and life in it as ephemeral, it does so on certain empirical data. Such generalisations as "Everything is mortal" (மடங்கலுண்மை), "The world is painful" (இன்னாதம்ம இவ்வுலகம்), "Happiness follows virtue" (இன்பம் அறத்து வழிப்படூஉம்) are experiential wisdom. Several instances of life are observed, their uniformity is ascertained in

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like inclusion, tradition, gesture etc., are reducible to inference, *Puram* seems to accept as many as five.

57. துய்ப்பேம் எனனே தப்புந பலவே.

58. விடாதோர் இவள் விடப்பட்டோரே.

Kural devotes several verses to denounce the empiricism of the materialist who runs the risk of misunderstanding the meaning of existence and wasting away the invaluable chance of life.

ஒருபொழுதும் வாழ்வது அறியார்,
கருதுப கோடியும் அல்ல பல. (337)

See also 351-360, where sensory experience is at a discount, appearances are debunked. Facts of life must be thoroughly probed with reason and inquiry. Science is the critique of common sense.

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the teeth of exceptions, and the general principle is enunciated.[59] These general principles in their turn are the logical ground of all reasoning.

Observation and experiment in however unsophisticated a form were the basis for many of their theories of the physical nature. As we have shown in the earlier pages, the people of the *Puram* had substantial knowledge of the basic elements of nature, the nature of the soil and seasons for the purpose of agriculture, of the vagaries and vicissitudes of the wind and the sea for a safe voyage of trade and military expedition, of astrology and astronomy to predict events according to planetary positions, civil and mechanical engineering to construct buildings with concealed contrivances, of metallurgy to melt and mould gold and iron into variety of wares, of animal psychology to domesticate animals and train them for the army, of human nature to develop the science and art of personal and corporate living in well organised communities.

All this would have been impossible if the scientific method of observation and experimentation has not been consciously employed, had hypotheses not been conceived and tested by relevant evidences and appropriate conclusions drawn. The corpus of such knowledge was passed on to younger generation through an education which was oriented towards successful living.

Puram has recognised sources of knowledge other than perception. It does not develop, nor is its purpose to develop, a theory of knowledge. Yet one can easily find instances where the logical methods have been employed to draw conclusions, establish causal connections and offer explanations.

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59. Thus the infinite variety of nature is reduced to order by the marks of identity, persistence, continuity and simplicity. Max Plank called this the "unity of the world picture". *(A Survey of Physics,* Ch. I). J. M. Keynes observed that the individual variations in the world aer finite in number. This is the principle of Limited Independent Variety. This means that the uniformities in nature could be discovered. The scientist wants to make statements about what always happens, not about what sometimes happens.

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Logical inference was a familiar method of arriving at conclusions in the *Puram*. It is aware of even diverse types of inference. For instance, it employs the method of agreement and difference[60] as follows.

The existence of the body and its disintegration are respectively accompanied by the presence or the absence of life: The intention of the song in the *Puram* (186) is to show that the king is really the life-breath of the people; not the food or the water. The positive major is "If there is a good king, the people are lively; if there were no king, the people are not lively, whatever else may be present or no".[61] As in John Stuart Mill's experimental methods, the poet here wants to establish a causal connection between a good king and the welfare of a people. Of course, this is an inference presupposing a considerable extent of enumeration of instances in various places and at various times in the history of peoples, a proper scientific analysis of those instances as to which of them are vital or essential as to be invariably and unconditionally connected with the thing to be proved.[62] The connection between the good king and the welfare

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60. In Indian logic, three types of inference are mentioned depending on the nature of the general principle used as the major premise. They are (1) merely positive *(kevalānvayi)*, (2) merely negative *(kevalavyatireki)* and (3) positive-negative (*anvaya-vyatireki*). The last one is illustrated in the argument: "If smoke then fire" and "If no fire no smoke". The first is the positive major (*vyāpti*) and the second is the negative major.

61. This is the way in which the method of agreement and of difference will be formulated in Western logic. In the first case, king is mixed up with the other possible causes of the welfare of a people though he is invariably found wherever there is well-being among a people while other factors like food and water vary. This is the method of agreement. If the king were not there, the life of a people becomes barren and anarchic in spite of the presence of the other factors. This is the method of difference. Indian logic will formulate it as: If well-being, there is a good king; if there were no good king there will be no well-being.

62. This is known as *niyata-anaupādhika-sambandha* in Nyāya.

This means that *good king* is the middle (*hetu*); *welfare of the people* is the major term (*sādhya*). A general proposition (major premise) is valid if and only if the major term is found in all place without exeper-

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of a people must be invariable and unconditional. Thus the *good king* is the necessary and sufficient reason for the welfare of the people. A similar generalization is made on the invariability between food and life,[63] between birth and death, growth and decay.[64] Such inductive generalisations are in their turn applied as the major premises in deductive and demonstrative syllogisms such as this: "Whatever is born is liable to death. X is born and therefore X is liable to death".

Deductive inference is the application of the general principles to particular situations.[65] The Cārvāka materialist refuses to admit that such general propositions that are universally true are discoverable. Since our knowledge, he contends, is restricted to what we can experience by the senses, there could be no proposition which is valid for all time. To the empiricists, all propositions are at best probable. In the sciences, no more than probability is claimed for the laws which may, in the light of fresh unpredictable evidences, have to be revised or restated or even totally rescinded.[66]

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tion where the middle term is present. Negatively, where the major term is absent, the middle also must be absent. From this it does not follow that where the middle is absent, the major must be absent if the major has more than one reason for it. Though when smoke is present, fire must be present and when fire is absent smoke must be *ipso facto* absent, yet when fire is present, smoke need not be, as in the case of the red-hot iron. However, a strict *vyāpti* must be invariable and unconditional and would require that the major has only one condition which is necessary and sufficient for it. This is called *sama vyāpti*. If the king were the only condition of the well-being of the people, we can infer one from the other with equal validity unlike the case of smoke and fire which is *asama vyāpti*. Scientific inquiry has as its ideal the discovery of such equipollent connections between facts. It does not brook plurality of causes.

63. உண்டி கொடுத்தோர் உயிர்கொடுத்தோரே
உண்டி முதற்றே உணவின் பிண்டம். (*Puram*: 18)

64. *Ibid.*, 28.

65. All men are mortal; Socrates is man; Therefore Socrates is mortal. This is typical Western syllogism.

66. Science believes in the uniformity of nature which is the principle that the same cause produces the same effect. It is a postulate of science for

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Yet, without such laws, experience itself will become irrational and mysterious. We do have enough evidence both in life and in science for such uniformities in nature. It is very rarely that such uniformities turn out to be false. To ask for an absolute certainty in knowledge, as we tried to show in discussing skepticism, is to paralyse all the intellectual enterprise of mankind. For instance, the generalisation of the *Puram* that all that is born is bound to die has rarely been contradicted and it is very unlikely that it will be contradicted in the future, if things as we know them continue to be what they are.[67] *Tolkāppiam* is

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which further proof could not be given since all proofs are based on it. It cannot be arrived at inductively like any other general proposition because when we try to do so we already presuppose it. Professor A. N. Whitehead wrote: "There can be no living science unless there is a widespread instinctive conviction in the existence of an order of Nature" (*Science and the Modern World*, p. 5). That nature is orderly and its general laws are discoverable are the faith of mankind even in the days of the *Puram*.

67. John Locke was skeptical about universal principles. "But as to a *perfect science* of natural bodies, we are, I think, so far from being capable of any such thing, that I conclude it lost labour to seek after it". (*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, p. 271). Russell, however, did not allow scepticism to undermine his work-a-day conviction. "None but a fool or a mad man will ever pretend to dispute the authority of experience or to reject that great guide of human life". (*Inquiry*, Section IV, Pt. II). Yet theoretically it is possible that our everyday expectations will be thwarted because there may not be any uniformity of nature. "We may be in no better position than the chicken which unexpectedly has its neck wrung". (*The Problems of Philosophy, p. 63*). To the question whether the sun will rise tomorrow, Russell thought the answer could not be given for certain. It is doubtful whether the laws of motion will remain in operation until tomorrow. Wittgenstein asked as against this: "Why would it be *unthinkable* that I should stay in the saddle however much the facts bucked?" The non-uniformities are the facts that buck. Wittgenstein asks: If positive instances, experience, information about the past are not the ground for our belief in the uniformity of nature, what else could be the ground? If anyone said that information about the past could not convince him that something would happen in the future, I should not understand him, he said in his *Investigations*. (p. 481).

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familiar with the concept of cause and causal relationship. Under *Verrumai Iyal* (74) the material cause is distinguished from the instrumental cause. It speaks (79, 80) about relations, separable and inseparable, also as a category of thought under the same head. It means to say that causal relation is one of the fundamental categories of the world.

Tolkāppiam classifies words into nouns and verbs and says that the verb stands for action in time (*Sol.*, 198). Causality is action in time and the verb may be said to represent this fact. When describing a thing which functions at all time, in the past, present and the future, it is said that only the present tense of the verb should be used (240). The illustrations that are given for this are all general propositions which have universal application and validity. For instance, Prof. Ilakkuvanar in his *Tolkāppiam In English with Critical Studies*,[68] gives the following propositions: "Carts run in this street on all days". "He who works hard succeeds"; "He who sins goes to hell". The general propositions do not refer to any particular person or things. The significance of the present tense in the verb of these general propositions can never be missed. The form is reducible to: "If P, then Q". Given P, Q must follow. The connections of things and events are essentially causal uniformities. Non-causal uniformities are descriptions which can be reduced with fuller knowledge into causal explanations. The world according to Tolkāppiar is lawful and uniform. General propositions which are valid for all time could be discovered and this evidently could be done only by a close and purposeful observation of nature and its varying moods. Thus it is beyond doubt that Tolkāppiar was implicitly aware of induction and deduction.[69]

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68. p. 337. Kural Neri Publishing House, Madurai-6, 1963.

69. The procedure in the treatment of the subject of this work which Tolkāppiar adopts is itself an instance of the deductive application of general principles to special cases in point. See Dr. S. Illakkuvanar p. 346. *Tolkāppiam* which is the earliest available Tamil work, very often universalises. It talks about 'Space' and 'Time', the 'World', categorises and classifies men and things on scientific principles. See *Poruḷ* : 5 for instance. The division of *Mutal*, *Karu*, and *Uri*, into

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Tolkāppiam arranges the living beings into a hierarchical order of the faculty of intelligence. Some have one sense, others two, yet others three or four or five as the case may be. The human being comes on the top of them all having the sixth 'sense' which is rationality.[70] That man's differentia was his rationality was known to *Tolkāppiam* much earlier than to many a philosopher in the East or in the West. Rational man alone is man; others, though look like men, are not, and are classed with beasts.

The significance of this stratification is far-reaching. A sharp distinction seems to have been made between sensation and sensory perception on the one hand and conceptual thinking on the other hand.[71] Rationality which consists of concepts and their relations is largely a matter of inference and implication, analysis and classification on certain logical grounds. Perception supplies the manifold data for the discovery of concepts by the mind. Empiricism and rationalism seem to have an equal place in knowledge according to *Tolkāppiam*.[72]

ANALOGY

Comparison or analogy seems to have been consciously employed in these Tamil classics as a means of knowledge.[73] In

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Tiṇais are all tendencies to reduce the multiple world to an intelligible order and system.

The inductive principle which is of philosophical and ethical importance is that of the impermanence and finitude of the world. (*Poruḷ*. 78–79). And it is applied to life. *Ibid.*, 41.

70. *Poruḷ*: 582.

71. *Poruḷ*: 196, where sense and knowledge are distinguished. The sense-perception leads to error when it is not rightly construed.

72, Even the future can be read on the basis of birth-day and omens. *Poruḷ*: 91. See *Puram*: 20, 41, A state of love is inferred by the behavioural symptoms. *Poruḷ*: 114, 118. *Matiuḍampaḍutal* is knowing by inference the lovelornness (127). See also 137. Certain mental states cannot be perceived by the senses but can only be inferred, for example, fear, chastity, suffering etc. (247). The reference here is to Dr. S. Ilakkuvanar's book.

73. Any striking resemblance may form the basis of an argument by analogy. The resemblance should be vital and essential, not trivial. For instance

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the *Tolkāppiam* a section has been devoted to simile (உவமம்) which is based on comparison as a method of knowledge. The principles by which comparison is to be made are laid down. (a) The whole and part of one object must be compared with the whole and part of another. (b) The objects must be commensurable.[74] Iḷaṁpūraṇar says in his commentary that comparison will make the unknown known and also lend beauty to the expression. In illustrating the first, he uses the example that the Nyāya thinkers employ.[75] A townsman goes to the forest. He wants to know what a *gavaya* is like. The forest-ranger tells him that the *gavaya* is like a cow. Equipped with this information, the townsman goes into the forest and a *gavaya* makes its appearance. At once, the man notices the similarity of features between the animal and the cow, and remembering what the forest-ranger told him, he realizes that the animal is a *gavaya*.[76]

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no analogical argument could be attempted purely on the basis of the number of resemblances between two objects. J. M. Keynes asks us to take into consideration the total positive analogy (resemblances) and total negative analogy (dissimilarities) for a sound inductive generalization. Indian logicians insist on *sādharmya* and *vaidharmya* (that is, both comparisons and contrasts) in an argument by analogy. It helps us to class things together and apart. If two things had many important similarities in some respects rather than the dissimilarities, we can believe that the two things are similar in other respects also. If the planet Mars resembled the earth in some vital respects, we can conclude that, like the earth, it has life in it. Analogy is suggestive only, not a proof.

74. See *Uvamaiyiyal* for other principles which have direct relevance to literature.

75. See Iḷampūraṇar on *Uvamaiyiyal*.

76. Strictly speaking, he now knows that the animal is the one signified by the term '*gavaya*'. The Advaita and the Mīmāṁsā differ from this account. A person goes into the forest and happens to come across an animal which looks very much like a cow at home. From this he concludes that the cow at home resembles the animal in the forest. That is, the cow is the focus of comparison, not the animal in the forest. In this account, no forester figures and the resulting cognition is not of the meaning of the word '*gavaya*'. Yet, the Nyāya has the advantage of the element of knowing what the animal in the forest is called. In Sāṅkhya and Vaiśeṣika systems, comparison is reduced to

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In the *Puram*, much is taught by comparison. A deer is standing on a marshy tract. The terrain is slippery. A hunter spots the deer but the bad stretch of the marsh stands between him and the deer. The deer in the meantime manages to escape. Similarly, a man may give a slip to the traps of life if he stands on the slippery ground of detachment. The attachments are the hunter, the deer is the man; the slippery ground is the life of dispassion.[77]

The poet praises Pāri for his charity. He says 'no' to nobody. In this, he is comparable to God who has no likes or dislikes. God accepts even the stale flowers when offered in piety.[78] The suggestion is that Pāri resembles God in many more respects.

We find samples of negative analogy also in the *Puram*. Kapilar employs this kind of analogy when he contrasts the king Ceramān with the sun. The sun shines only during the day. It goes into hiding in the night losing its place to the moon; wanders in the northern and southern paths (*uttarāyaṇa* and *dakṣiṇāyana*) with no fixed abode; rises at dawn and sets in the dusk. Hence the sun has a number of minus points. The king Ceramān, on the contrary, shines in his royal glory all the time; he does not change, nor does he turn his back to the enemy; his sovereignty is unquestioned and has come to stay.[79]

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inference. The Jainas think that comparison is not an independent means of knowledge but is reducible to recognition. Buddhists think that it is a combination of perception and verbal testimony.

77. அதளெறிந்தன்ன நெடுவெண்களரின்
ஒருவனுட்டும் புல்வாய்போல
ஓடியுய்தலும் கூடுமன்
ஒட்கல் வாழ்க்கை தட்குமாகாலே.
This is instance of positive analogy.

78. 106. The very first *Kuraḷ* is a paradigm of comparison. The consonants and vowels and their relation to the first letter 'a' provide Vaḷḷuvar with a perfect analogy to the relation of the world to God. The unknown illustrated in the known becomes at once obvious.

79. வீங்குசெலன் மண்டிலம்
பொழுதென வரைதி;

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PRESUMPTION[80]

When some fact is inexplicable without the assumption of a particular cause, the method of presumption is said to be employed. We presuppose an explanation for an event. We proceed from the consequent to the antecedent, from the given to the ground, though at the moment the ground may not be at once present to us.

When a man is on fast during day, and if he still manages to maintain his pounds, then it can be presumed that he is compensating it by eating in the night. This is not inference because, if it were, it must move by a general principle of an invariable relation between being fat and eating at night. There is no such principle involved. In inference, we proceed from a perceived fact of, for instance, smoke to the unperceived fire. This might seem a common point between inference and presumption. Yet there is a vital difference that cannot be missed. In presumption, we proceed from a fact or situation to be explained to that evidence which explains. In inference, on the contrary, we proceed from the evidence to that which is explained by it. Again, in presumption we have a situation which has inexplicable contradiction or doubt in it and unless we presume something to dissolve it, it remains a puzzle. In inference, on the contrary, the sign (smoke) that helps us to infer the fire is definite and certain. If we know the invariable connection between smoke and fire, we can pass from the first to the second. In presumption, though we know *that* there must be, or, is an explanatory fact for a puzzling situation, we do not know *what* it is.

A classic example in science of this feature of presumption is the history of the discovery of the planet Neptune. The planet

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புறங்கொடுத்து இறத்தி ;
மாறி வருதி ; மலைமறைந்து ஒளித்தி ;
சேரலாதனை யாங்கனம் ஒத்தியோ.

The *Vaidharmya-upamāna* also helps objects to be classed apart. For instance, certain animals are classified with horses because *unlike* the cows they have no cloven hoofs.

80. In Tamil: அவாய்நிலை.

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Uranus was, in its orbit around the sun, exhibiting an irregularity. It was behind schedule in its motion. This was puzzling because the known laws of nature like the law of gravitation were not able to provide an explanation. Every precaution had been taken in the calculations against any chance of mistake. Still the irregularity of Uranus persisted.

Then a bold presumption was made which was a break-through. It was assumed that perhaps there was a celestial body with enough mass to deflect Uranus from its calculated track. Not long after, when the skies were scanned, it was discovered that there was a planet in the solar system of exactly that much mass to account for the differential motion of Uranus. This was the discovery of Neptune.[81]

When all the known causes fail to explain a phenomenon, we look out for cause hitherto unknown, without which the phenomenon will remain a riddle. In the *Puram*, the nature of the world as constantly changing presupposes as its explanation one principle that is God. Similarly, the experiences of pain and pleasure, which cannot be accounted for by the known causes, are traced to one's own past deeds in previous lives. That character is what accompanies one even after the body falls is a finding based on the method of presumption.

In the *Kuraḷ*, in the very first verse, it is indicated that without a first principle, the phenomenon of the world is unintelligible. It will be a puzzle if God is not understood as its cause and ground. The structural and functional peculiarities of letters and language presuppose for their possibility the first

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81. In Western logic, the method by which Neptune was discovered is called the Method of Residues. The French astronomer, Le Verrier, after many trials ascertained that, by assuming a certain size, shape and position for the unknown planet, and a certain value for the mass of the hypothetical body, it would be possible to account for the observed disturbances of Uranus. L. S. Stebbing calls this method deductive rather than inductive.

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vowel; which itself does not presuppose anything logically prior to it.[82]

AUTHORITY

A large chunk of our knowledge is derived from authority in the nature of secular verbal testimony as in the history of the past or revealed scripture. The latter is texts acknowledged as sacred handed down from the immemorial past or spoken word in the present of the authentic great men of vision.

Verbal testimony is the first source of our knowledge even to learn the three Rs from the schoolmasters. Words and their senses are learnt entirely by authority alone, language being largely a convention. Why a word means this rather than that is not an empirical matter of fact but is what the teacher tells us. Similarly, the ethical principles and truths about the unseen metaphysical matters are received from the competent authorities without asking the reasons therefor. To statements of fact, some experience or other may be relevant evidence. There may be statements, however, which refer to transempirical matters where the authority or the source of testimony is the only proof. In Indian thought, only reliable persons could be authorities. A reliable person is one who is not only in possession of truth but also has no self-interest or personal motives behind his words. He must be unbiassed purveyor of an objective truth, intent on doing good to the humanity at large. Authority for spiritual and ethical truths is the revealed Vedas alone, which have no author human or divine, while those truths so expounded in detail by seers and sages as codes according to the needs

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82. *Tolkāppiam*, as we have seen earlier in these pages, was the earliest to realize the presuppositional value of the first vowel and similarly, of God as the explanation of the world. மெய்யினியக்கம் அகரமொடு சிவணும். See Parimelalagar on *Kural*: 1. The letter 'a' is uttered naturally and not by transformation of other sounds. So God is naturally the principal of existence. See *Tolkāppiam, Piṟappial*. At the end of the *Marapial*, there is mentioned the உய்த்துக் கொண்டுணர்தல் which seems to be the method of presumption. It is explained as finding a suitable meaning for a word when the given one is not suitable. A conflict is here removed by presuming a meaning.

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of the times are human and as such are of inferior authority. The latter can be questioned and modified as the situations demand. And whatever authority they command is only derived from and subordinate to the revealed scripture called *śruti*. It should be said here that some Indian philosophers like the Naiyāyikas say that God is the author of revealed scripture,[88] while others

83. Among the Indian thinkers, the heterodox materialists, the Buddhists and the orthodox Vaiśeṣikas do not admit testimony as a source of knowledge. They reduce it to inference. Kumārila, the Mīmāṁsaka, says that words produce in the mind of the listener, who understands them, a knowledge of things that are not knowable by other sources like perception. Works may state a matter descriptively or issue command prescriptively. In the former case, language is a picture of reality; in the latter, it is used like the rules of a game like tennis. Language is essentially performatory, a set of rules. It is with the latter that the Mīmāṁsā is associated while Advaita holds the view that at least there are a few descriptive statements which do not have a performatory reference. Śaṅkara believes that performatory language is ultimately based on descriptive statements of fact. Nouns are logically prior to verbs. The Mīmāṁsaka differs and says that the verb is the centre of the sentence. J. L. Austin differentiated between illocutionary acts and perlocutionary acts of speech. The former includes among other things mere describing. The latter will comprise instructions to do some thing. One of Austin's book had the title, *How to do things with Words* (1902). Wittgenstein says in his *Philosophical Investigations* that words like 'block', 'slab' and 'beam' are uttered by the mason only to make the assistant labourer to bring them. Words are like the tools in a tool-box: hammer, pliers, saw, screw-driver, rule, glue-pot, nails, screws. What do we do with them? Similarly we do with words as tools in a language-game. The meaning is understood by doing with the language as the tool. The word 'ball' is understood only when it results in appropriate behaviour towards it. In fact, according to Mīmāṁsaka in India, meanings are understood and language-game is learnt either by doing the appropriate acts at the mention of a word or watching at least others executing those acts. Speaking a language is to engage in 'forms of life' both according to Mīmāṁsaka and Wittgenstein. "If a lion could talk, we could not understand him", because the lion does not share the appropriate forms of behaviour with us; it is not in the relevant stream of life. All philosophical problems and puzzles arise when language goes on a holiday, or, to use another metaphor of Wittgenstein, we become flies in a bottle, not knowing how to get out.

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like the Advaitins hold that God merely transmits it from aeon to aeon.

In the *Puram*, there are references to scriptures and ethical codes. Āvur Mūlaṅkilār declares that it is the warning of the ethical code that for one who is guilty of ungratefulness, there is no redemption.[84] He also refers to the scripture being ever chanted by the Lord.[85]

Kaṇian Pūnkunranār tells us that the truth of the souls being governed by the unexceptionable logic of moral determinism is ascertained by the vision of the seers.[86]

Tolkāppiam defines the *Muthal nūl* or primary source of knowledge through verbal testimony as that which is formulated by an authority who is in possession of the necessary knowledge and is free from impurities.[87] Such an authority follows unfailingly the tradition (மரபு), The tradition in its turn is created by the wise.[88] If tradition is violated or departed from, the meaning would be mangled and distorted. It is the sayings of great men that become tradition.[89] Among the seven types of composition in vogue in Tamil country, the book of moral codes and the

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84. செய்திகொன்றார்க்கு உய்தி இல்லென
அறம் பாடிற்றே. (34)

85. Perhaps the reference here is to the four Vēdas and their six supplementaries.
முதுமுதல்வன் வாய் போகாது
ஒன்று புரிந்த ஈரிரண்டின்
ஆறுணர்ந்த முதுநூல்.

The six supplementary disciplines of knowledge are: (1) *Śikṣā* which has the status of nose or vital force for the Vēdapuruṣa. (2) *Vyākaraṇa* or grammar is the face. (3) *Candas* is the feet. (4) *Nirukta* is the ears. (5) *Jyotiṣa* is the eyes. (6) *Kalpa* is the hands.

86. திறவோர் காட்சியில் தெளிந்தனம்.

87. வினையின் நீங்கி விளங்கிய அறிவின்
முனைவன் கண்டது முதனூலாகும். (640)

88. வழக்கெனப்படுவது உயர்ந்தோர் மேற்றே.

89. உயர்ந்தோர் கிளவி வழக்கொடு புணர்தலின். (213)

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adages of traditional wisdom were included.[90] Love, too, has its own moral codes.[91] Even actors on the stage have got codes of functions like the one of explaining tradition.[92] Among the themes fit for literature are the sayings of great men.[93] The friend of the beloved maiden explains the moral maxims of the great men who are well-versed in the scripture which helps us to ascertain the true and the false.[94]

WORDS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

A word can have either a direct meaning[95] or an implied sense. Besides, there are words which are coined for a special

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90. வாய்மொழி, முதுசொல். (384)

91. 203.

92. தொல்லவை உரைத்தலும். (166)

93. *Ahat.*, 36.

94. வாய்ம்மையும் பொய்ம்மையும் கண்டோர்ச் சுட்டி.
Ahat., 42,

95. All words refer to objects, says *Tolkāppiam*, their nature and form. Except the nominative or the first case, the rest of the cases refer to action in one way or another. Thus nouns and verbs have opposed definitions. While the noun has no cases and no time, the verb has them. Time is the very essence of the verb. The definition of the noun includes its taking a finite verb after it. In the case of general and universal truths for all time, the present tense alone is used. While all action takes place in time, truth is timeless. Hence, *Tolkāppiam* is aware of statements describing a truth and those which enjoin action. Both noun and verb are important. Dr. Ilakkuvanar says that *Tolkāppiam* believed that the sentence preceded the words constituting it. See his *Tolkāppiam*, p. 312. Hence *Tolkāppiam* discusses syntax first before taking up parts of speech, according to him. Is the sentence-sense prior or the individual word-senses? Does construction precede expression or is it otherwise? Vedāntins and some Mīmāṁsakas believed that it is the second. Some other Mīmāṁsakas held that it is the first. It seems, according to the first view, that first we logically form an idea as to what we should say, particularly so if it were an action and find suitable words to express it. In this case, all words convey their own senses and the sentence-sense as a whole to which they are subordinate and lead to. On the second view, we first use the words each one of which has its own sense and, subsequently, we connect in a syntax all the words into a sentential

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purpose. These are called *paribhāṣā* in Indian thought. The Naiyāyikas believe that the direct and literal meaning of a word is God's own making while the Mīmāṁsakas believe that the relation between a word and its sense is natural and eternal. The technical jargon used in the special areas of knowledge is the convention created by man which, for this very reason, is mutable.

In contrast to the direct meaning created by God's decree and the terminology of man's own convention, there are meanings that are implied. When the literal sense is for some reason unintelligible, the implied suggestion must have to be adopted. When we are told, for example, "The village stands on the Ganges", it makes no sense if we stick to the literal meanings. If the sentence is to have a meaning, we should not construe it literally by the primary senses of the words but interpret it by secondary implication. We then say that "The village is on the *banks* of the Ganges". The word 'Ganges' sheds its own meaning, namely the waters, and is made to stand for the banks to which it is related. The rhetoricians will put it a trifle differently. They will say that the sentence "The village stands on the Ganges" is suggestive of the coolness and sacredness of the place. In either case, a meaning is abandoned and another is substituted in its place.

A sentence is a significant combination of words and as such it should fulfil four conditions. They are: (a) Expectancy (b) Competency (c) Proximity and (d) Import.

A word always expects another to complete its sentence. When one uttered a noun or name, one tends to ask: "What of that?" If one mentions a verb like 'bring' the impulse is to ask "Bring what?" Unless this expectancy is fulfilled, no judgement is born.

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sense. Meaning comes after expression. It seems that an idea is prior to its expression from the standpoint of the speaker, though is is otherwise from that of the listener. These are respectively called *anvitābhidhāna* and *abhihitānvaya* in Indian linguistics.

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Secondly, it is not as if any two words are combined at random. "Moisten with fire" makes no sense as moisture does not go with fire. Thirdly, words, particularly spoken ones, must have some reasonable contiguity. Fourthly, meanings are ascertained with reference to the intention of the speaker or to the context. This very often happens because a word may have more than one meaning. A word, we may say, is fit enough to yield only one meaning rather than another, depending upon the occasion which is also at the same time a matter of expectancy. A word may sometimes, however, be used in unfamiliar senses, when their meaning must have to be known only through the intention of the speaker. On the other hand, even when a parrot speaks, the words could be understood though there could be no intention on the parrot's part. It is obvious then that the intention is to be sought where ordinarily the sense is not conveyed by the words themselves.

In the *Tolkāppiam*, the literal direct sense and the secondary implication are distinguished.[96] In expounding and elucidating a work, not only the plain straight senses must be referred to but also the subtle suggestions and shades of senses must have to be brought to light.[97] Even though a diverse variety of meanings would suggest themselves, yet a statement in a work must have to be construed only in line with what has gone before it, not in isolation tearing it out of context.[98] Completing the sentence with an appropriate word is recognised as a method of making a sentence significant.[99] When a meaning is not intelligible,

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96. See *Peyariyal*.

97. See *Marapial*, 656. What has been left unsaid must also be made explicit Satire particularly requires a knowledge of the intention of the speaker. Such a satire is called *Paḷikarappu* or *Aṅgatam*.

98. It is necessary in understanding a statement to add to it from what precedes it. One specific sense among the many must be reasonably fixed.

99. *Māṭṭu* is a method of such completion. *Seyyuḷḷiyal*: 541. *Eccam* is an expression which is wanted to complete the sense of the statement or

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another meaning is to be supplied. *Munnam* is to fix the sense to be conveyed in a particular context or place.[100]

When words of contradictory senses are uttered together, their import must have to be judged from the context, says *Tolkāppiam* in *Ecca Iyal*.[101]

It seems then that in *Tolkāppiam* the hidden or secondary implication is to be grasped only by the context which will reveal the intention of the author. Where no particular author is evident, the statements themselves must have to be linked with passages before and after and the meaning has to be fixed.

Implication of a meaning quite different from the expressed one is also alluded to, as we have shown, in *Tolkāppiam*. Though *Tolkāppiam* is particular about tradition, usages and practices, it is liberal enough to allow for freedom to evolve special terminology as occasion would demand. Thus, *paribhāṣā* was a known variety of language-symbol.[102]

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suggestion which is understood (507). This is comparable to *vākyaśeṣa* in *Mīmāṁsā*.

100. இவ்விடத்து இம்மொழி இவரிவர்க்குரிய வென்று
அவ்விடத்து அவரவர்க்கு உரைப்பது முன்னம்.

Prakaraṇa or context is one criterion to fix the meaning in Mīmāṁsā exegesis.

101. See also *Kiḷaviyākkam*, 53. See *Kuraḷ*: 1096, 1271. Buddhists in India refuse to accept verbal testimony as source of knowledge at all. Perception and inference will give us all the knowledge that we want. Hence verbal testimony could be reduced to inference. Words are the signs of such inference. Vaiśeṣikas agree with the Buddhists.

102. Iḷavaḷaganār in his article in the *Puranānūṟṟu-corpoḷivugaḷ* (p. 257) says that *Puranānūṟu* itself is the saga of saints and points out that there is a good deal of similarity between the saints of *Periyapurāṇam* fame and those philosopher-saints of the *Puram*. For instance, Koccengat-coḷa-nāyanār in the former is the same as Colan Cengaṇān in the *Puram*. Naṁbi Āṇḍār Naṁbi designates the poet-philosophers of the *Puram* as

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INTUITION

Direct intuition can both be sensuous and non-sensuous. The sensuous is, strictly speaking, not as immediate as it is ordinarily supposed to be. But the non-sensuous intuition is a direct vision of reality. It is *Kātchi*, open to the great saints, seers and sages. The hidden spiritual laws are apparently disclosed to the doctors of spirit in deep contemplation. The law of moral determinism is one such revelation.

Kuraḷ devotes a section to the intuition of truth (மெய்யுணர்தல்). That it is non-sensuous is made clear by Valluvar when he declares that even the most perfect sensory experience is as good as useless when wisdom does not accompany it. In fact, the senses may lead one to fathomless pit of darkness and delusion. True knowledge sets at nought the primordial metaphysical ignorance that causes the rounds of worldly existence. It is the insight into the true nature of things. It is self-knowledge that cleanses the soul as fire burns out dross and dirt. It is called the 'pure vision', (மாசறு காட்சி), that dispels the darkness of the soul. Such people are called 'seers' (மெய்கண்டார்).[103] The words of such great men are scriptures.[104]

Such mystic revelations, of course, presuppose a good deal of preliminary discipline in its hardest core. Intuitions are the deliverances of mystic experience,[105] wherein divisions and distor-

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saintly souls: தரணியிற் பொய்ம்மையிலாத் தமிழ்ச் சங்கமதில், கபிலர், பரணர், நக்கீரர், முதல் நாற்பத்தொன்பது பல் புலவோர். Similarly, Kārikilār must be Kāri Nāyanār, even according to U. V. Swaminatha Iyer (in his *Puranānūṟu* edition).

103. See *Kuraḷ*: 351–36–.

104. *Ibid.*, 28.

105. See *Kuraḷ*: The entire *Illaṟaviyal* and *Tuṟvaṟaviyal* are one comprehensive preparation for the final vision. Spinoza in the West identified three stages in the ascending order towards religious experience. They are sense-knowledge, intellectual expansion and intuition. He sees all things in God and God in all things. Kanian Pūnkunranār cried: "I

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tions are overcome and transcended into a direct awareness of unity and oneness. As Meister Eckhart put it, it is the "deepest depth", a "noetic quality", according to William James, which is an immediate feeling of a revelation of objective truth. This is the *Kātchi* of the *Kuraḷ* and the *Puram*. Boehme spoke: "In this light my spirit saw through all things and into all creatures and I recognized God in grass and plants". Such unitive vision is often called *extrovertive* mysticism as contrasted to *introvertive* one where introspectively the soul finds its depth in its own inner chambers of being. In *Puram* and *Kuraḷ*, both the types are evident. The quest for *meypporuḷ* is pursued objectively and subjectively. The equanimity of Kanian Pūnkunranār is evidence of both subjective and objective unity of vision. The content of intuition is the meaning and purpose of creation as a whole.[106]

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am a native of the world; all are my kin". (யாதும் ஊரே; யாவரும் கேளிர்). This utterance could be made only by one who has intuited one reality amidst all the varying phenomena. It is an all-comprehending vision. Rational knowledge is systematic, constructive, critical; intuition is total, direct and indubitable. Plato and Plotinus spoke of the absolute truth, the *nous*. William Blake, the mystic, wrote:

See a world in a grain of sand
And a heaven in a wild flower.
Hold infinity in the palm of his hand
And eternity in an hour.

The Sūfi mystic, Attar, speaks of seven stages in the journey to God: The quest, love, knowledge, detachment, unity, amazement and annihilation of the ego. This is comparable to the Christian stages: purgation, illumination, contemplation, absorption, ecstasy, divine dark and merging in the Divine Love.

106. See *Mysticism and Philosophy*, by W. T. Stace, p. 85. Such an extravertive mysticism, we can boldly say, was the central core of the seven great kindly souls in Tamil classics like Pāri for whom charity knew no limits. Plants and birds were equally the recipients of this love for Pāri and Began.

எப்பொருள் எத்தன்மைத்தாயினும் அப்பொருள்
மெய்ப்பொருள் காண்பதறிவு.

See *Puram* for such great souls of equal vision. (182). They are the ஆன்றவிந்தடங்கிய கொள்கைச் சான்றோர். (191)

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Intuition or *Kātchi* is the only source, in the ultimate analysis, of wisdom. Intuition is not anti-rational; rather it is the fulfilment of reason. Reason will insist on the splitting up exhaustively of the links of the process of arriving at conclusions. Intuition is integral insight wherein the intervening stages are not clearly marked out. The office of reason, as Plotinus said long ago, is to distinguish and define, dismember and dissect. It is the function of intuition to unite and harmonize. The former is to *know*, the latter is to merely *be*. Commenting on the *Tolkāppiam*, Iḷaṁpūraṇar says that self-realization or intuition of truth is part of the *Vāhaittiṇai* and he quotes two verses from the *Kuraḷ* to illustrate his point.[107] Such an intuition is not merely

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The words of this poet remind one of the *Sthitaprajña* of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Pūnkunranār says:

தீதும் நன்றும் பிறர் தர வாரா
நோதலும் தணிதலும் அவற்றோரன்ன
சாதலும் புதுவதன்றே
வாழ்தல் இனிதென மகிழ்ந்தன்றுமிலமே
முனிவின் இன்னாதென்றலும் இலமே
பெரியோரை வியத்தலுமிலமே;
சிறியோரை இதழ்தல் அதனினுமிலமே.

Cp. well-known verse of the *Gītā*:

vidyā vinayasaṁpanne
brāhmaṇe gavi hastini
śuni caiva śvapāke ca
paṇḍitāḥ samadarśinaḥ. (V, 18).

Arthur Koestler wrote of his mystical experiences thus: Then I was floating on my back in river of peace under bridges of silence! It came from nowhere and flowed nowhere. Then there was no river and no I. The I had ceased to exist. The I ceases to exist because it has, by a kind of mental osmosis, established communication with, and been dissolved in, the universal pool". (Quoted in *Mysticism and Philosophy* by W. T. Stace). It was absolute catharsis, limitless expansion, the peace that passeth understanding.

107. See *Ahatt.*, 75. *Kuraḷ*: 351 and 354. The reference here is to the line in the *Puṟattiṇai Iyal*: பொருளொடு புணர்ந்த பக்கத்தானும்.

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intellectual but involves the whole being of man.[108] Truth is hard to see. It is to be won by renouncing all that smacks of desire, animosity and delusion. Perfection is in direct proportion to the elimination of these evils.[109]

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108. அருளொடு புணர்ந்த அகற்சியானும். Here everything that is incompatible with inner grace is at once abandoned. Only a soul free from all spiritual blindness and moral backwardness can be the receptacle of the illumination of truth.

The lines merit full quotation:

அரும்பகை தாங்கும் ஆற்றலானும்
புல்லா வாழ்க்கை வல்லாண் பக்கமும்
ஒல்லார் நாணப் பெரியவர்க் கண்ணிச்
சொல்லிய வகையின் ஒன்றொடு புணர்த்துத்
தொல்லுயிர் வழங்கிய அவிப்பலியானும்
ஒல்லார் இடவயிற் பில்லிய பாங்கினும்
பகட்டினானும் மாவினானுங்
துகட்டபு சிறப்பின் சான்றோர் பக்கமும்
கடிமனை நீத்த பாலின் கண்ணும்
எட்டுவகை நுதலிய அவையகத் தானும்
கட்டமை ஒழுக்கத்துக் கண்ணுமையானும்
இடையில் வண்புகழ்க் கொடையினானும்
பிழைத்தோர்த் தாங்கும் காவலானும்
பொருளொடு புணர்ந்த பக்கத்தானும்
அருளொடு புணர்ந்த அகற்சியானும்
காமம் நீத்த பாலினானும்.

109. Ilaṅpūraṇar quotes *Kuraḷ*: verses 340 and 341.

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CHAPTER V

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

The society of the *Puram* age was a glorious one constituted by lofty ideals. It was far from being sensate. Its guiding principles in the main were righteousness, love, courage, truthfulness, knowledge, friendship, chastity, charity, sympathy, honour and dignity coupled with a high seriousness of purpose and practical realism, It had in its body-politic all elements of thought and action. Its goals were well defined, courses of action were well settled. In short, it had a clear philosophy of life both individually and socially.

The greatness of a people is judged by the civilised height to which it could rise.[1] Material power as well as spiritual vision are the measure of civilization. In the *Puram* we have abundance of evidence for both. In a gathering, *Piśirāndiār*, the elder poet-philosopher, was asked what the reason was for his health at such an advanced age. He replied that the secret was not far to seek. A noble wife, intelligent children, obedient and faithful servants, a just king and, above all else, sages in his town who had mastered their senses and conquered their ego, resolve the mystery.[2]

A fair government, a happy family and an enlightened society are mutually complementary links that constitute an interrelated organic system. We cannot have one of them without the others.

A description of the typical citizen of a civilized society is given in the *Puram*.[3] He hates to have his food, even if it were ambrosial, without sharing it with others. He is sensitive to

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1. மாந்தர்தம் உள்ளத்தனையது உயர்வு. *Kural*: 595.
2. 191.
3. 182.

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social opprobrium. He will not hesitate to lay down his life if honour and fame demanded it. He will not accept the entire world if it entailed ignominy. He is tireless in his labour, not so much for himself as for others. It is by such people, declares *Puram*, that the world is kept in its position (182).

It is sometimes suggested that the culture of a people is largely determined by geographical factors like the landscape and the climate. There are others who believe that a culture is shaped by the economic forces of production, exchange and distribution of the goods and riches of the land. It is a moot question again, say others, whether the society makes the individual what he is or it is the opposite. The society is the individual writ large, say some, while others disagree and assert that the individual is nothing if he were not subservient to the society as a whole. An authoritarian dictatorship will be moving by an absolutism wherein the whole determines the parts. A democratic society will be inspired by the pluralistic realism wherein the constituents are independent entities entering into external relations with each other for specific purposes and goals. The individual is inviolable in the latter and the whole system of the society is reflective of the individual interests.

It cannot be gainsaid that a decent and free society of people will have checks and balances, as democratic constitutions do, to safeguard the interests of both the individual and the society as a whole. Nevertheless, it is man taken in his integral entirety, rather than a collective community, that is the fulcrum of social set-up. Some have emphasised the political life of man as fundamental; some have concentrated on the economic man. But to fragment man into departments is to miss him as a man. Mas has an outer life and an inner one. The outer is only a means to the inner. The former is two-fold: (a) ethical excellence and (b) material affluence. They subserve the purposes of (c) the inner life of love and happiness. These three constitute the instrumental and the intrinsic values of the people. It is not very difficult to see that the intrinsic values of love and happiness

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are essentially private and personal in the ultimate analysis. Happiness of everyone is the goal of the *Puram* society.

Though the *Puram* communities were monarchies,[4] in form, they were republican democracies in substance. The ground for this claim is the very obvious fact of the society and governments being guided and advised by the wise counsel of the sages and saints.[5]

Society is not a natural order of things ; it is the purposeful creation by human design. It is not a statistical collection of heads, it is the echo of the thoughts and sentiments, ideals and aspirations of the whole people of a land. Society is not an aggregate as forest is of trees, with but a collective name. Nor is it a rigid regiment like that of an army.

It is more like a poetic drama with its one thousand nuances, conflicts and congruence, love and hate, hope and despair, ardour and ecstasy. It is minds and hearts rather than numerical quantities.

In *Puram*, Avvaiyār addresses the land and tells it that whether it is a territory of a people or stretch of a jungle, a fertile valley

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4. It is not the military strength, but justice and equity that constitute the greatness of a king. *Kural*: 546. The world is protected by the king; he is protected by moral law. (547).

   அரசனின் கொற்றம் அறநெறி முதற்றே. (*Puram*: 55)

5. Momentous decisions that gave history a twist were taken by kings at the instance of sagely poets. Two Chola kings were fighting against each other. One of them besieged the other in hiding. Kovūrkiḷār, the poet, intervened and ended the war. Another king, Kiḷḷivaḷavan, was about to kill the children of his defeated enemy. Kovūrkiḷār stopped this cruelty in time and freed the children. (*Puram*: 46). Peruntalai Sāttanār went to Kumaṇan, the exiled king, for charity, not knowing that the usurper brother of Kumaṇan had fixed a price for the head of Kumaṇan. Kumaṇan had nothing to offer to the poet except this price of his own life. He gave the poet his dagger asking him to behead him and take the head to his brother and get the gift. The poet took the dagger, not to behead Kumaṇan, but to show the nobility of Kumaṇan to his brother. A daring act, indeed. (*Puram*: 165)

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or a barren waste, its distinction is not its own making. If the people inhabiting the land are cultivated and refined, it rises in its value; when they are wicked and barbarous, it becomes a hell.[6]

The wise men shape the thoughts and aspirations of people. It is they who lay down the principles of social organisation making it an effective instrument for the realization of values and goals. They create the social ethos and set the norms.

Kings were guided, as we pointed out, by sagely poets in the age of *Puram*. They eagerly sought their views and hardly dared to transgress them. This was not an occasional chance event. There were assemblies of good and wise men created by design to advise the king on the rights and the wrongs.[7] King Nedunceliyan proclaims that the government of the country will follow the way of the wise.[8] Education and culture were in very high esteem. In the face of education, distinctions of low and high disappear in shame.

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6. நாடாக ஒன்றோ காடாக ஒன்றோ
அவலாக ஒன்றோ மிசையாக ஒன்றோ
எவ்வழி நல்லவர் ஆடவர்
அவ்வழி நல்லை! வாழிய நிலனே. (187)

7. மறங்கெழு உறந்தை அவையத்து
அறம் நின்று நிலையிற்றாகலின். (39)
The king is compared to the tigress which protects its young ones. (42).
Again: Cp.
அறநிலை திரியா அன்பின் அவையத்து
திறனில் ஒருவனை நாட்டி முறை திரிந்து
மெலிகோல் செய்தேனாகுக! (71) See *Puram*: 72.

See also *Puram*: 20, 35, 42, 55, 117, 221, 230 for the sceptre as the symbol of justice.

The *Kural* says that a land without wise men in it is not worth the name (731). See also 635. An ill-advised king perishes. (370). See also 441–450.

8. அறிவுடையோன் ஆறு அரசு செல்லும். (183)

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Mudukannan Śāttanār tells the king Nalankiḷḷi that his riches should be used in the service of righteousness, wealth and happiness of the people.[9] Nedunceliyan swears that if he did not win the war in a righteous way, he will forego the honour of being sung by the saintly poets.[10] Kings are bluntly warned by poets that it is by the industry of the people that a kingdom flourishes.[11]

Thus, the fulcrum of the society was the good and enlightened individuals.[12] This is not however a "charismatic" influence as the sociologist, Max Weber, will put it. It did not have any awe of the supernatural either.

Righteousness, material wealth and happiness are the triune values expressly recognised by the *Puram* philosophers. One who lives in accordance with these values is sure to be emancipated. Of these, righteousness and material welath are relevant to social life (புறம்) while happiness is a value relevant to love

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9. 28.

10. 72.

11. 35.

12. Plato realized that the society is a reflection of the individual. He envisages the society as organic wherein, as in the case of the individual, reason was the guiding factor which was at the same time law or morality. Justice was the highest virtue. Aristotle agreed with Plato in the insistence of morality as the means to happiness as the ultimate goal. The Roman mind on the contrary took legal justice as an end in itself. In the Middle Ages in European history, man's relation to society was reversed. Society became all-important. Ibu Khaldun (1332–1406) in his *Prolegomena to Universal History* advanced the theory that it is the sense of living together with common ties in a common endeavour that generates solidarity. Machiavelli divorced morals from politics and substituted a mechanical view for the organic view of society. The Reformation saw the emergence of the concept of the Divine Right of Kings. Kings were the repositories of all power, even over the spiritual institutions. Hobbes in his *The Leviathan* made the monarch the chosen authority with investiture of absolute power by the people who would otherwise be in a state of anarchy. Grotius (1583–1645) redefined justice, the linch-pin of law, as reflective of the perfectly rational order of

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(அறம்).[13] Emancipation may be subsumed under righteousness and hence is said to be included in the first category of values though it is incommunicable.[14]

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things, not the whims of the State. It was Rousseau (1712–78) who popularised the concept of general will as against the will of the individuals. Saint-Simon (1760–1875) thought of history as social physics. Social regime is an application of a philosophical system. Society is not a simple agglomeration of human beings; it has a true being. It is in industry that the real forces of society lie. In this he anticipated Karl Marx. August Comte (1798–1853) thought that family is the basic unit of society bound by sympathy leading to cooperation by division of labour in society at large.

Among the modern sociologists, Buckle and Le Play seem to think that the landscape decides the mores of a people. A particularistic society grows out of an agricultural and fishing occupation and tends to be democratic, inventive and enterprising. Spencer (1820–1903) thought, a progressive society was characterised by complexity, differentiation and integration. Emile Durkheim (1855–1917) divided societies into mechanical and organic, the latter being more differentiated with its division of labour. George Simmel (1858–1918) insisted on the role the individual plays in interaction with other members of the society. Cooley (1864–1929), said that the individual finds his true nature only in society. Karl Marx observed that the state is an instrument of coercion. Law, philosophy, religion and art will be a reflection of the economic conditions and class-divisions of a society. Ultimately the proletariat will take over and there will be no classes to exploit. Weber (1864–1920) disagreed with Marx and said that one should analyse the deeper motives of action which may not be economic at all. Actions are purposive, prescribed, traditional and emotional. They constitute social relationships. Malinowski (1884–1942) interpreted a culture in terms of function. Culture is a relation among the institutions which are sets of activities organised around some need of purpose, occupational, religious, recreational and so forth.

13. *Puṟanānūru and Samayam* by Iḷavaḷaganār in *Puranānūṟṟu śoṟpoḷivugal*, p. 246.

14. But even love which belongs to *Ahattiṇai* is not expressible in words, though felt as experience. *Aham* and *Puram* are integral aspects of human life. In fact, *Aham* is the end to which *Puram* may be said to be the means. Dr. Doraiarangasamy in his *Tolkāppia Neṟi* is of the view that a life of love which starts with the family is the portals to eternal beautitude (பேரின்பம்). Thus love is the basis for both *Aham* and *Puram*. See pp. 303–8. See also 323–34.

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CHAPTER VI

ETHICS AND AXIOLOGY

To start as a householder and a citizen, to practise all the virtues at home and abroad, to achieve the fulness and satisfaction, to be in the company of good and wise men towards the evening of life's journey equipping oneself for the final felicity is the essential fruit of living.[1] The felicity is not discontinuous with the world, nor is it an eschatological condition after the departure from the body on death. It is a condition of the soul which is obtainable here and now while living in the body.[2]

That wealth is only an instrumental value has been emphasised in *Tolkāppiam*, *Puram* and *Kuraḷ*.[3] *Puram* declares that wealth

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1. See *Tolkāppiam*:

   இன்பமும் பொருளும் அறனும் என்றாங்கு
   அன்பொடு புணர்ந்த ஐந்திணை மருங்கின்
   காமக்கூட்டம் காணுங்காலை. (*Kaḷavu*: 1).

   See *Puram*: 28.

   காமம் சான்ற கடைக்கோட்காலை
   ஏமம் சான்ற மக்களொடு துவன்றி
   அறம்புரி சுற்றமொடு கிழவனும் கிழத்தியும்
   சிறந்தது பயிற்றல் இறந்ததன் பயனே. (*Kaṟpu*: 51)

2. See *Kuraḷ*: 351–360. See the expression: ஈண்டு மெய்ப்பொருள் கண்டார். (356).

   Iḷavaḷaganār says that it is for this reason that *Tolkāppiam* has placed, in the *Seyyuḷiyal*, the scripture as one of the types of literature that mirrors life. *Kuraḷ* itself is sacred literature incorporating within it all the values, both intrinsic and instrumental.

3. சிறந்தது பயிற்றல் இறந்ததன் பயனே. (*Tol.*, *Kaṟpu*: 51).

   Even the love and happiness of a married life are here considered only as instrumental to a higher destiny. In the *Kuraḷ*, wealth earned through unimpeachable means brings righteousness and happiness alike in its wake. When it is acquired through doubtful and devious ways [it is

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and happiness follow righteousness.[4] We have already shown in the earlier pages of this monograph that in *Puram*, a naive egoistic hedonism and a crass materialism are alike disowned. Wealth and pleasure pursued for their own sake will blind man to many a felicity in life.[5] The world deserts those who cling to her charms in foolish pertinacity.[6] Man should see through the deceptive masks of the world at its inner core to exploit its inexhaustible joys.[7] *Puram* does not exalt or encourage shallow hedonism but certainly praises the hedonism (if hedonism it is), of the joy and felicity of perfection, (பேரின்பம்), to which every other value is subordinate. The happiness even of love is thus instrumental to a higher beatitude which is never narrowly personal.

In the *Tolkāppiam*, *Puram* and the *Kuraḷ* several views are expressed as to the relative weight and value of a householder's life as distinguished from that of an ascetic who has renounced it. Sometimes it seems that there is a conflict between these

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positively dangerous. (754–5). Charity and grace are born of love and nurtured by wealth, their foster-mother. (757). When wealth is amassed, righteousness and happiness will at once accrue to one. (760). However, wealth is found even with the wicked men, They may prosper for a while. But wealth unaccompanied by charity and grace is spiritually barren. (241, 248). Happiness is only through righteousness. (9).

4. The Coḷa king marches ahead in a parade with Pandyan and Ceran umbrellas following him. The poet compares this to righteousness being followed by wealth and happiness. (31).

6. 189.

6. 385.

7. 194. Money has only an instrumental value to purchase things with. It was of no use to Robinson Crusoe. Are things that we purchase with money worthwhile in themselves? Surely not. We want these things because we feel we will be happier with them. But the question why one should be happy is odd. It is its own reward and happiness is not mere pleasure. One may have pleasures without being happy. Some ethical pluralists consider knowledge also as one of the intrinsic values. Immanuel Kant made goodwill the highest value which shines by itself like a gem even though it has not always succeeded. Self-realization is an intrinsic

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two ways of life. To evaluate and judge as to which of them is superior is profitless because both of them have, it appears, been regarded as two phases of the same life.

In the *Puram*, however, we have instances where the life of renunciation has been extolled as superior to that of the householder. The worldly life and renunciation are weighed in the balance and the former comparatively suffers.[8] Those who abandon the world live a true and authentic life.[9] The life of the world of bonds to one's own possessions leaves pain as nett result in the balance-sheet, while those who have with penetrating insight rent the veil of the untrue mask of the world have eternal joy as their share.[10] The attachments of a family are positive hindrance to a spiritual life.[11] So long as one is wedded to a life of affection, he cannot be free from the strokes of sorrow.[12] When the near and the dear ones depart from our midst, the void smites the soul irreparably. Sooner or later one has to come to terms with inexorable death. People are forewarned as to the inevitable fate overtaking them and one is counselled to renounce the world before it renounces them.[13]

Yet, a pause is given to this strain of thinking. No extreme one-sided judgement is made. The balance is restored at the earliest. The ascetic aloofness may be appropriate to those who have lost their life-partners[14] and do not have any more active

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value, say others. But for Tamil culture, happiness in the noblest sense is the *summum bonum*.

8. *Puram*, 358.

9. *Ibid*.

10. 194. See also 189.

11. 193. ஒக்கல் வாழ்க்கை தட்குமாகாலே.

12. 194.

13. 363. இன்னு வைகல் வாரா முன்னே
செய்ந்நீ முன்னிய வினையே
முழுநீர் வரைப்பகம் முழுதுடன் துறந்து.

14. Cp. *Tol.*, *Purattinai Iyal*: 24. See *Puram*: 245, 248.

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interest in life. Ordinary run of mankind cannot possibly run away from the ties of blood and obligations that they entail. For them, the family and society are the only environment to practise love and charity effacing in the process much of the sharp edges of egoity and exclusiveness.

Here then is the golden mean of a spiritual career. It is by such a disciplined participation in what concerns others in society that man is chastened into spiritual dignity and power. The householder is the apprentice for a higher calling. Renunciation is best tried only in a family and a society. One who always claims attention for himself will soon be a misfit in any community. A social system demands the readiness to give up one's own preferences and penchants in the interests of the community. Family itself is an institution where the individual loses himself identifying his interests with those of others whom he loves. It is thus that the *Puram* speaks of wise men who had gone through this fire of social living and become ripe and integrated souls.[15] They are the salt of the earth. They did not

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15. ஆன்றவிந்தடங்கிய கொள்கைச் சான்றோர். (191)

Persons such as these are usually described as "beautiful souls". Goethe has given a striking account of one in his *Wilhelm Meister*. Caird in his *Hegel* (pp. 28–31) has made some suggestive remarks on the attitude of the "beautiful soul". Asceticism must not be mistaken to be an end in itself. If done so, it suffocates and is much more injurious than wilful indulgence to moral well-being. Everything has a measure and relevance to the end in view which is, to the Tamil genius, to obtain a wisdom that liberates from narrowness. Aristotle placed contemplative philosophical wisdom above the practical life of social virtues. (See *Ethics*, Book X, Chap., 7 and 8). But performance of social duties is a preparation to this higher life. Carlyle preached a gospel of labour. Goethe wrote:

A genius forms itself in solitude
A character, in struggling with the world.

Action and contemplation are the "gymnastic" and "music" of life. As in Greece, the ancient Tamil culture esteemed both as components of a genuine moral education. An overdone contemplation in isolation to the detriment of purposeful action does damage to the active part of our

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seek solitude away in the retreat of a forest or in the cell of a cloister or the recess of a cave. One can be within the four walls of a society and yet be spiritual through and through.

Yet if one wants to spend the rest of his life after having served his family and society well, undisturbed in seclusion, he has every right to do so because he has earned his retirement and rest. The spiritual growth and maturity are gradual, smooth and continuous, not by jerks and jolts, fits and starts. There is no unnatural tearing away from the ardours of life; nor a violent privation of emotions. It is a life according to natural demands by a planned control and regulation and with no repressions of the vital springs. Laurels are paid to such great men in the *Puram*. Mārippittiār points out to us an ascetic who was not always an ascetic but who had lived a full and fruitful life of service and sacrifice and who has now chosen to live away from the din and dust of the commerce of the community. Away in the forest, he bathes in the waterfalls, warms himself in the fire lit with dry wood of the jungle and dries his tangled locks of hair in it.'[16]

THE CONCEPT OF THE GOOD

By 'good' here, we mean the supreme good which is intrinsically the highest positive value that a person rationally chooses. It is evident in the three Tamil classics we are

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being. Such a man is "so good that he is good for nothing". Wordsworth said in his sonnet to Milton:

Thy soul was like a star and dwelt apart;
.....And yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

(Quoted by Mackenzie in his *A Manual of Ethics*, 6th Edn., p. 363).

Socrates in Greece was a perfect example of a sage at home, not losing himself in the immediate environs; though in it, he was not of it.

16. கழைக்கண் நெடுவரை அருவிஆடி
கான யானைத் தந்த விறகில்
கடுந்திறல் செந்தீ வேட்டுப்
புறந்தாழ் புரிசடை புலர்த்துவோனே. (251)

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considering in this work that the supreme 'good' is chosen as the goal of moral endeavour by deliberate choice. That it is by deliberate choice, not a cursory slip of an accident, is also proved by the fact that explicit statements are found in them, particularly in the *Puram*, on goodness as practised not because it has any metaphysical implications, but even as worldly duty. We will mention some of them here before proceeding to deal with the concept of good. Goodness can be an intrinsic value. It need not refer to anything beyond it as heavenly bliss (மறுமை) or liberation (வீடு). It is done because it ought to be done and it is an end in itself. This situation is graphically dramatised in the *Puram* :

Some people had gathered and were discussing the value of gifting and charity. Much of it, if not all, seemed to them to have been motivated by considerations of personal outcome in the form of fame while alive and of joy in the hereafter. This was hardly different from trading with motives of profit.

These comments reached the ears of Muḍamośiār, the poet-sage. He broadly agreed with them. There was a large element of truth in what they felt. But, it was not the entire picture. The situation was not that much hopeless. There were great and beautiful souls who gave away vast riches with no ulterior motive. Gifting to the needy was its own reward. They never thought they were doing something exceptional but took it in their stride as part of their duty which, if not performed, would hardly be becoming of them. Āy Antiran was one of them. He did not even consider and calculate the prospects of paradisical pleasure as a reward for his good deeds. He did not fix a price for virtue and barter it for pleasure. Goodness is an obligatory function which, if performed, will not bring any reward but which, if not done, will amount to gross dereliction.[17]

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17. இம்மைசெய்தது மறுமைக்காம் எனும்
அறவிலை வணிகனுய் அலன்
சான்றோர் சென்ற நெறியென
ஆங்குப் பட்டன்று அவன் கைவண்மையே.

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Moral act is not a contract, nor does it arise out of fear or of theological or metaphysical considerations. In this case it is deontological.[18] *Puram* seems to be aware of the distinction between motive and intention. One may be doing intentionally the acts but with a motive of being praised or being rewarded with heaven. It is possible that if fame could be achieved without a reference to good, this person will readily choose it as less troublesome.[19] On the contrary, one may have the goal of doing good but intentionally create misery to achieve it, though misery is not the motive. If possibly the good could be accomplished without the incidental misery, the person will gladly prefer it.

The ideal man of the *Puram* chooses the good by deliberate judgement in full appreciation of the inconveniences involved. It may be that he is injuring the immediate interests of himself and his family. For instance, doing one's duty to the country in times of war may not be serving the immediate comfort and joy of the

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18. This is the idea of 'obligatory' duty (*nitya-karma*) as contrasted with 'optional' duty (*kāmyakarma*) in Indian thought which has personal profit as a motivation. Immanuel Kant popularised in the West the theory of the Categorical Imperative. "Act only on that maxim which thou canst at the same time will to become a universal law". (*Metaphysics of Morals*, section II). Our actions are moral if they can be universalized. "Do not do unto others that you would not like others to do to you" seems to be the principle. A hypothetical imperative, by contrast, is one where there is an end in view. Kant thus said that there is nothing so good as the goodwill which is its own end. However, in a later treatment of the subject, Kant posited perfection and happiness as the twofold end of moral obligation.

E. F. Carrit, C. D. Broad, W. D. Ross and others have subscribed in contemporary times to deontological ethics. Good is intuitively self-evident; it refers to any given historically present situations wherein a moral decision is rationally taken in special response to them. In India, the *Gītā* insists on the performance of duty regardless of consequences to one's own self. It also warns against actionless inertia. Renunciation of the profits of one's action (*saṅgatyāga*) and *niṣkāmakarma* are enjoined. Acts that cannot be universalised are not moral. When these two principles are combined, we get a similarity to the Categorical Imperative.

19. Brutus intended to kill Caesar but his motive was to save the country.

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family relationship.[20] All duties are uncomfortable in the ordinary sense, though they become, in a larger and nobler sense, pleasure to those who perform them. And that is precisely the point. The ideal man in the *Puram* prefers his duty to anything else. It is born of a wisdom fully tested over years of tradition. A happy life is a "synthesis of wise ends actively pursued over a full span of years".[21] He is not a utilitarian subject to the "empire of pleasure and pain". He does not share J. S. Mill's view that to desire anything except as pleasant is a physical and metaphysical impossibility.[22] Goodness is its own reward and rightness of action coincides with the value of goodness. It is in this spirit that Began covered the peacock shivering in cold with his shawl.

This act was not for any reward, nor even for his own pleasure.[23] Rather, his very nature was such that there was no

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20. *Tolkāppiam* lists the occasions when a person has to be away from the family for the sake of war or learning or trade. This could not have been altogether a joyous occasion.

21. C. B. Garnett: *Wisdom in Conduct* (1940), p. 418. Quoted in *Contemporary Ethical Theories* by T. E. Hill (1960).

22. Though performing the duty for duty's sake is indeed pleasant this pleasure as such is not the aimed end. If anything, it is incidental. When Atiyamān gave away the priceless fruit to Avvai, it is true that he did so knowledgeably and with pleasure. But there was a total self-denial that did not seek a word of thanks from the recipient for throwing away a very rare and precious possession, not even for a song. Sir T. Browne declared in his *Religio Medici*: "I give no alms to satisfy the hunger of my brother but to fulfil the will of God".

23. படாம் மஞ்ஞைக்கு ஈந்த எம்கோ
எத்துணையாயினும் ஈதல் நன்றென
மறுமை நோக்கின்றோ அன்றே.

It cannot be denied that there are instances in *Puram* where people act for reward like reputation or heaven. Kings were interested in fame. But disinterested goodwill which is axiologically superior is an evidence, even when it is rare, of a sophisticated moral sense. Such a goodwill is not due to fear of law or custom. Utilitarian ethics is, on the contrary, largely a legalistic *must* and a list of sanctions. J. S. Mill spoke of conscience as an inner sanction. Bishop Butler took it as a real supreme moral authority. Kant made reason the authority while Simmel accepted compact majority as such.

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ought or 'must' needed as external pressure to make him act in any particular way. The presence of misery produces naturally and spontaneously a response that is not merely a conformity to a rule of conduct, though such a conduct may become a moral maxim to others. Hence, to describe such acts of Began, Atiyamān or Pāri as ethical duty misses the mark by a very wide margin. It is a spiritual character which, of course, is and must be ethical.[24]

It was Immanuel Kant who said that good will is intrinsically the good and the best value. Even happiness does not have this merit since it is valuable only when it is deserved and is accompanied by good will which is chosen by reason.[25] This is because there is a moral consistency of action as there is conceptual consistency in truth. Act, if it is to be ethical, must be capable of universal application because there is the oneness of life. Even the peacock and the *mullai* creeper deserve consideration. They belong to the kingdom of ends and Began's and Pāri's lives were *one,* with theirs. This is ultimately the basis of *Puram* ethics.

In the *Kuraḷ*, ethics is more explicitly coordinated with metaphysics. It believes that morality subserves the highest goal which, according to *Kuraḷ*, is liberation from the cycle of birth and death (மற்றீண்டு வாராநெறி). Ignorance is the cause of this cycle and knowledge of truth destroys it.[26] Knowledge itself is instrumental to this supreme felicity.[27]

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24. There have been people in the *Puram* who have gone 'beyond good and evil', as Nietzsche put it. Bradley said that the moral point of view has only a degree of truth. cp. Kaṇian Pūnkuṟaṉār and his equanimous attitude.

25. Kant himself did not spell out the logical end of his theory. In a sense, his good will remained merely formal, without content, as his critics never tired of saying. See *A Manual of Ethics*, by Mackenzie, p. 163.

26. பிறப்பென்னும் பேதைமை நீங்கச் சிறப்பென்னும்
செம்பொருள் காண்பதறிவு. (358)

27. 2. Roughly this is in a way act-utilitarianism which is teleological view of the moral act contrasted from the rule-utilitarianism which is deontological

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Kural gives us the definition of the good and the right.[28] Good is the value, we can say, realized through the right which pertains to action as a means. To be pure in heart constitutes all that is good. Craving, jealousy, anger and harsh language are the negation of the good. Actions that follow the inner cleanliness of heart and mind are right, which, then, are socially approved. To be good is the ground of *doing* it. Right follows the good as its logical consequence. One cannot be good and do the wrong. Ethically speaking, this will be as much self-contradictory as it will be to say that something that is not good yields happiness.[29]

There are certain other values, cherished by the *Puram* society, which can be subsumed under good. On the principle that nothing

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where the acts are judged without any reference to consequences, except the consequence following the rule. An act is right according to ethical naturalism because (1) the actor is satisfied about it (which is autobiographical definition); (2) the majority approve it (this is sociological); (3) God or scripture commands it, (theological); (4) an ideal man assents to it, (ideal-observer definition) (5) promotes maximum happiness (utilitarian). Perhaps one or some or all of these are factors in deciding the right.

28. Non-naturalism in ethics believes that 'good' cannot be defined in non-ethical terms. 'Good' is desirable which means "ought to be desired" and 'ought' is an ethical term and is fundamental and elementary. To consider 'good' to be a property or a natural object is a naturalistic fallacy, said G. E. Moore. Because good is pleasant, pleasure does not become good. All propositions about 'good' are synthetic, not analytic. Good is unique and indefinable like a colour or a taste.

29. 34, 35. Though 'good' cannot be, as G. E. Moore, said, defined in non-ethical positive terms, Valluvar seems to give here a negative definition. This definition, incidentally, saves ethical conduct from relativism. Norms of conduct differ from country to country. Yet inner purity is the same standard. This is perhaps one application of rule-utilitarianism according to which to whichever country one belongs, he will have a rule of conduct which is the only moral principle. Thus, wasting water in a desert society is a capital crime. In that society, a pure heart will not transgress the rule intended to protect the well-being of others.

For the same reason, good as a value is not subjective. Its objectivity lies in the universality of its application. There is no society which will object to the maxim : மனத்துக்கண் மாசிலனாதல் அனைத்து அறன். (34)

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that is repugnant to the norm of good can be a value of any sort. Valour and courage and friendship, even love and aesthetic sensibility are secondary to the good.[80]

Bravery is highly valued. In fact dauntless courage in action is unique in that though it is not conventionally incorporated in the classics of ethics and philosophy,[81] it is the ambition of everyone to get this rare distinction of indomitable courage in the face of danger.

There is a verse in the *Puram* which exalts valour to the status of divinity. The memorial stone raised in honour of a soldier who fell in the field but not before wiping out a good number of elephants of the enemy is the only fitting temple of worship, not the usual shrines.[82]

Friendship was a cherished value. Moving accounts of such friendship abound in the *Puram*. Charity was an accredited virtue. This is dramatized with vivid picturesqueness. Īrndūrkiḷār will urge the blacksmith in furious impatience to give him a lance at once to fight against the world at large if anyone told him that he had nothing to eat.[83]

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30. Cp. கழியக் காதலராயினும் சான்றோர்
பழியொடு வருஉம் இன்பம் வெஃகார். (*Aham*: 112).

31. 362. To be a brave soldier is the only dream of young men. The mother's delight is to beget such a son, See *Puram*: 312. An old mother, on learning that her son had been killed in the battle, did not cry but wanted to see the courage that her son displayed. When she saw the battered body of her son as a proof of his heroic fight, her breasts secreted milk in joy.

இடைப்படை யழுவத்துச்சிதைந்து வேருகிய சிறப்புடையாளன்,
மாண்பு கண்டருளி, வாடும் முலை ஊறிச்சுரந்தன. (295)

Another mother, at the sight of her son's dead body pierced by weapons in war, felt the same joy as when he was born (278).

32. 335.

33. 180. A woman prayed not for anything except to be a host. (306). A chieftain likes to share his wealth with the poor rather than to lend it. (315). A housewife, seeing that no grains are left to feed the

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ARTS

It is evident from references in the *Puram* that arts were developed and occupied an important place in the cultural life of the people. Flute and harp are mentioned.[84] Several kinds of Paṇ were known. Vocal music also was cultivated.[85] Kings and chieftains patronised the musicians with rich rewards.[86]

Drama, dance and music went together.[87] The world is compared to a drama wherein actors come and go in succession of costume and character.[88] Pictorial art was well developed,[89] not to speak of poetry.

Art, generally, is the expression of feeling, both in its creation and in its enjoyment. Mrs. Langer wrote in her *Philosophy in a New Key* that art is creation of forms, symbolic of human feelings. Through the symbolism, art expresses the inexpressible. It has its own language.

Ananda Coomaraswamy says that glimpses of the 'real substrate' may be seen by those of penetrating vision, namely,

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hungry beggar, uses the paddy seeds reserved for cultivation. (333). Nothing is so pleasing to a lady of the house as the sound of guests at the dining table.

34. 281. It seems music was supposed to have a curative effect on illness. *Kāñcippaṇ* was deemed to have the effect of keeping away the evil spirits. Similarly, *Viḷarippaṇ* drives away the jackals. (291).

35. 291.

36. 319.

37. 109; 221.

38. 29. The dance in which both men and women participate is called *alliam*.

39. 251. A house is likened to a picture. Dr. A. Chidambaranathan Chettiar observes: To say that the house is like a picture requires a long development in the growth of aesthetic consciousness. (*Puṟanānūṟu and Arts* in *Puṟanānūṟṟu-toṟpoḷivugaḷ*, p. 59). Earlier in this monograph references have been made to the great aesthetic sense of the people in the arts like dress and decoration.

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artists, lovers and philosophers.[40] Plato said in his *Republic* that objects in the world are representations, however imperfect, of the ideal artefact. A good craftsman who wants to make a good shuttle will fix his attention on the ideal shuttle. The poet-philosophers of *Puram* have had the ideal society in their vision, and against it they have looked around to sift the tendencies and urges towards the ideal in the contemporary society. Indian aestheticians have held that works of art, including poetry, are reminders or representations of what had been seen by the mind.[41]

In the *Tolkāppiam*, literature is classified into *Aham* and *Puram*, the life of the heart and the public social conduct. For everyone of the seven categories of the *Aham*, there is a corresponding one in the *Puram*,[42] thereby showing that the inner life of emotions is as much, if not more, essential to man's well-being as the outer one of social context. *Vāhai*, among the seven varieties of *Puram* literature, describes social success. It is defined by *Tolkāppiam* as one of attaining great distinction without harm or hindrance to others.

The heroes of literature include the seer and the sage, the king and the artists. Themes for bravery and virtue are equal in number. Moral strength was praised as much as physical courage. Abdication of the throne, nobility of the members of an assembly of men, good conduct, philanthropy, forgiveness and disinterestedness are illustrations of moral strength depicted in literature.

Kāñci is the literary division that portrays the tragedies of life. The values of *aṟam*, *poruḷ* and *inbam* are, however great they are in life, yet, from a higher and total perspective, brittle

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40. *The Dance of Siva*, pp. 36-7.

41. See 'Hindu view of art' in *The Dance of Siva* by Ananda Coomaraswamy.

42. Kuriñji, mullai, marutham, neythal, pālai, peruntiṇai, and kaikkiḷai have *vetchi*, *vañji*, *uḻinai*, *tumbai*, *vāhai*, *kāñci* and *pāḍān* corresponding to them. Five out of these seven refer to war. Not that men were always at war; but on occasions of war, exemplary courage was displayed. Very often war was waged only in defence. This is the subject-matter in *Puram* literature of *vañji* and *tumbai*.

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before the power of time. Philosophical brooding casts a moodiness over people and tends to paint things in grey. Fundamental questions of existence are raised to rock the foundations of belief. The picture that emerges as a result is anything but encouraging. Life looks tragic in the ultimate reckoning. Professor Ilakkuvanār remarks on the *Kāñci* theme that it is a turning point in the evolution of Tamil literature.[43]

By 'tragedies', it is not merely the wreckage of time through natural causes that is meant. Even war is terrible as it involves wholesale massacre of people and devastation of territories. Honour and heroism exact heavy price from those who would woo them, and wooing honour was almost a profession with men and women of those times. Hence, tragedy could be said to have been accepted as part of the game. But yet, the sting and scar of the pain of the loss of those who are dearer than life are only too brutally real to be missed or dismissed.

Poetic, and so philosophic, themes of tragedy, therefore, are spelt out in *Tolkāppiam* and illustrated in the *Puram*. The point is that the tragedy is now a matter of artistic expression and an aesthetic experience, *inbam*, as a value.[44] Tolkāppiar has enumerated eight kinds of emotional responses (*meyppāḍu*) : laughter, weeping, despisedness, wonder, fear, fortitude, anger and delight. Literature inspires through emotions. Tamil genius has thus placed literature under the category of *Poruḷ*, the very substance of life. Literature reflects, after all, the subtle springs of life which are adequately comprehended by the divisions of *Aham* and *Puram*.

Poets were not only philosophers but were the unacknowledged legislators of the country. Their words had the sanction of law though tendered as advice.[45]

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43. His *Tolkāppiam (In English)*, p. 454.

44. In true art, "emotions are held to the experience and worked into its unity because they go to intensify the thought and imagination and thus vitalize those activities". Gurrey: *The Appreciation of Poetry*, p. 38. Quoted by Dr. S. Ilakkuvanar, *op. cit.*, p. 427.

45. The literary forms of such function of the poet are *vāyuṟai*, *śeviyaṟivarūu*, *puṟanilai* and *kaikkiḷai*. The scheme as a whole is *pāḍān*.

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The development of literary art in *Tolkāppiam* is the delight of aestheticians. The minute divisions of literary form, which seem to have been existent even much earlier than Tolkāppiar are illustration of the high degree of refinement of the culture of Tamil Nadu from an antiquity that is almost dateless.[46]

Emerson said that literature is a record of best thoughts. George Boas wrote, on the contrary, in his *Philosophy and Poetry* that literature has no relevance to philosophical thinking. T. S. Eliot said "neither Shakespeare nor Dante did any real thinking". A. O. Lovejoy in his *The Great Chain of Being* has attempted to give the history of ideas from Plato onwards including therein literary productions also. Literature indeed has always reflected philosophical outlooks. Renaissance Platonism pervades Elizabethan poetry and Shakespeare's works. Milton tried to combine materialistic and Platonic elements. Dryden echoed the current skepticism. Pope's *Essay on Man* has philosophical overtones. Coleridge was a philosopher even in the technical sense. Shelley shows the influence of Spinoza, Berkeley and Plato. Swinburne and Hardy reflect the pessimistic atheism. Yeats voices mysticism.

Dilthey has grouped literary productions according to the tendency of positivism, objective idealism and dualistic idealism. The first will display predominance of intellect, the second of feeling and the third, of will. Herman Nohl has shown that this typology will apply to painting and music also.

It can be granted that the literature mirrors the spirit of the times, though a literary piece need not necessarily contain a philosophy at all. If it becomes expressly philosophical, on the other

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46. It is said in *Tolkāppiam* (1358) that there are, according to learned men, thirteen thousand seven hundred and eight rhymes. Prose and poetry have their own diverse forms and conventional contents. The love-themes comprising the *Aham* have been systematised with consummate imagination and artistry in *Tolkāppiam* in the divisions of *kaikkiḷai, kuriñji, pālai, mullai, marutam, neytal* and *peruntiṇai*. These are unilateral love, mutual love, separation, lady waiting for her lord to return home, sweet quarrels, lady pining in separation and untrue love.

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hand, it may suffer in its excellence as literature. Benedetto Croce has argued that Goethe's works alternate between poetry and over-intellectualisation. In Dostoievsky, there is the discrepancy between artistic success and the weight of thought.[46a] Yet it is still largely true that literature ought to reflect life and its moods as *Puram* does.

Puram as rythmic poetry is at once an expression of thought and a creation of beauty.[47] Hegel distinguished three kinds of beauty: (a) symbolic represented in architecture; (b) classical art in sculpture and (c) romantic art represented in music, painting and poetry. The last is the most adequate expression of art. It is the struggle to express the inexpressible by hints, suggestions and shocks. Applying this Hegelian scheme to *Puram* poetry and *Tolkāppiam*, one can venture the view that here we find the symbolic and the suggestive in a struggle to express the ineffable. Yet there is alongside this climate a robust optimism which makes poetry naturalistic as distinguished from the abstract. Naturalistic art is the result of a pantheistic relation between man and the outside world with a feeling for and a pleasure in the forms and movements found in nature.[48] *Puram* poetry

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46a. See *Theory of Literature* by Rene' Wellek and Austin Warren, 1956, Chapters IX and X. Hudson wrote in his *An Introduction to study of Literature* that literature is an expression of life through language.

47. Sidney Lanier's *Science af English Verse* (1880) expounded the theory that metre in poetry is analogous to rhythm in music. In the United States this theory was developed into a system where each syllable in a word is assigned a musical note.

Professor Alalasundaram Chettiar has illustrated the rhythmic elegance of the *Puram* lines:

நிலனெளி மருங்கின் நீர்நிலை பெருகத்
தட்டோரம்ம விவிட்டட்டோரே
தள்ளாதோரிவட் டள்ளாதோரே. (18)

மடத்தகை மாமயில் பனிக்குமென்றருளிப்
படாஅ மீத்த கெடா நல்லிசை
கடாஅ யானைக் கலிமான் பேக: (145)

Puṟanānūṟṟuccoṟpoḷivugaḷ: p. 100.

48. Edgar Allen Poe wrote in his *The Philosophy of Composition* that beauty invariably excites the sensitive soul to tears. Melancholy is the most legitimate of poetic tones. Keats would have assented to this statement.

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illustrates how attitudes towards beauty are not easy to be stuffed in a straitjacket. Melancholy and joy are equally the music of the chords excited by nature.[49] *Puram* poets were not merely didactic, nor did they write poetry for poetry's sake[50] as the aestheticisms would have it.[51] When they had to correct people, they used forthright language with no attempt to conceal or camouflage their feeling. Where necessary, they used satire (அங்கதம்), as Tolkāppiar calls it, and striking examples of these could be given from the *Puram*.[52]

Poetry is an expression of a kaleidoscopic variety of feelings and emotions (*rasa*). *Tolkāppiam* has systematised them into eight beginning from humour.[53]

In the *Kuraḷ* in the *Kāmattuppāl*, the emotion of love is taken up for exclusive treatment. Indeed a good deal of attention

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49. Incidentally, Poe argues that a long poem is a contradiction in terms. Poetry is equated with short lyric. Intense elevations could never be long. *Puram* songs are all of them short. This might not be an accident. See Prof. Alalasundaram Chettiar's article. *op. cit.*, page 105-6.

50. Pater was against any absolutes in ethics. When asked by a student; "Why should we be moral?" he replied: "Because it is so beautiful". To Oscar Wilde, moralism is the mortal enemy of art. His epigrams were: "All art is perfectly useless"; "All bad poetry springs from genuine feeling"; "Art never expresses anything but itself".

51. See *Tolkāppiam*, *Puratt.*, (35) and *Seyyuḷ* (112). See *Puram*: 5 and 55 for examples.

52. 26, 95, 167,

53. *Meypāṭṭial*: 5. See *Puram*: 378. When a king made gifts or ornaments, men who received them did not know how to wear them. The poet compares them to the monkeys in Kiṣkinda who were at a loss, when they found the ornaments dropped by Sītā, as to how to put them on and where in the body.

Prof. Alalasundaram Chettiar has illustrated the other *rasas* in the *Puram. op. cit.*, pp. 109-110. See *Puram*: 43, 72, 77, 159, 320. There are instances of subtle suggestion (*uḷḷurai uvamam* and *iraiccipporuḷ*). See *Puram*: 23. This is comparable to *Dhvani* of Ānandavardhana. Ānandavardhana in his *Dhvanyāloka* says in one place that he wants to harmonise suggestion with aesthetic emotion. The phrase *rasadhvani* is significant.

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has been paid to the grammar of love in the *Tolkāppiam* which has set the tone and tenor of the theme.

An aesthetic experience is the crowning result of a permanent mood following an evocation, behavioural gesture and subsidiary sentiment. These are the *rasa*, the *sthāyibhāva*, *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and *vyabhicāribhāva* respectively. For instance, erotic sentiment is the *sthāyi*, the lover or the environment like the season is *vibhāva*. The suggestive gestures like the glance of the beloved is *anubhāva*. Pleasure in being near the loved one, pain in separation and the like are the *vyabhicāri bhāvas*. The emotion of love is the *rasa*. The *vibhāva* itself is again classified into *ālambana* and *uddipana*. While the first is the object of love itself, the second refers to the immediate stimuli like the place and the time.[54]

Rasa is called *śuvai* in Tamil aesthetics.[55] This is the emotion at experience swelling in the heart. When exhibited in bodily signs they are called *sattva*.[56] The mental accompaniments that are imperceptible are called *kuṛippu*. The object that excites the emotion is *śuvaippaṭuporuḷ*. Thus, when one faces a tiger and is struck with fear, the tiger is the stimulus, fear is the emotion, the confusion is the invisible response and trepidation and perspiring are the perceptible physical signs.

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54. "To evoke in oneself a feeling one has experienced, and having evoked it in oneself, then, by means of movements, lines, colours, sounds or forms expressed in words, so to transmit that feeling that others may experience the same feeling—this is the activity of art." Tolstoy in *What is Art* quoted in *Sanskrit Poetics* by Krishna Caitanya, p. 23.

Emotions becoming poetic sentiments are...called *meippāṭu*. "What underlies it is a *bhāva*, a *kuṛippu* in Tamil. Tolkāppiyar adopts an "objective" rather than a subjective approach towards *meippāṭu*": Prof. T. P. Meenakshisundaram in *Aesthetics of the Tamils*, published by the Dr. Radhakrishnan Institute for Advanced Study in Philosophy, 1977, p. 15.

55. இருவகை நிலத்தின் இயல்வது சுவையே.

56. ஒன்றிய நிகழ்ச்சி சத்துவம் என்ப.
See Ilaṁpūraṇar on *Tolkāppiam, Meyppāṭṭial*, 245.

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If the inner invisible responses (*kuṟippu*) are included in the aesthetic *śuvai*, the behavioural signs and *śuvai* (*meyppāṭu*) remain eight each.[57] Laughter, weeping, despisedness, wonder, fright, bravery, anger, and joy are such behavioural signs. Each of these again is subdivided into subtle shades of difference. For instance, laughter itself is of a four-fold type[58] as even other behavioural signs are. In fact, behavioural signs are not simply eight but numerous.

In the *Kuraḷ* the *rasas* are amply exemplified. There are several instances of *vibhāva*[59], *anubhāva*[60], *vyabhicāribhāva*[61], *sthāyibhāva*,[62] and *rasa*[63] in the *Kuraḷ* where the theme is love and delight.

Writers on Poetics in India listed only eight *rasas*.[64] Bharata mentions only eight of them. The *rasa* of *śānta* is not reckoned as yet as the ninth.

While everyone of these eight *rasas* could be found in the *Puram* literature as exemplification of the *Tolkāppiam* norms, the

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57. உய்ப்போன் செய்தது காண்போர்க் கெய்துதல்.

Such behavioural exhibition is not peculiar to dramatic art alone. It is appropriate even in literature. Tolkāppiar says:

உய்த்துணர்வின்றித் தலைவரு பொருளின்
மெய்ப்பது முடிவது மெய்ப்பாடாகும். (*Śeyyuḷiyal*: 505)

The instance for this is *Puram*: 255. In fact, literary genius consists in bringing about the image of the behavioural signs in word.

58. எள்ளல் இளமை பேதைமை மடனென்று
உள்ளப்பட்ட நகை நான்கென்ப. (*Meyppāṭṭial*, 248).

See *Meyppāṭṭial*, 256.

59. For instance, 1081.

60. 1091, 1221.

61. 1104, 1111, 1116, 1118, 1124 and 1136. The references are by no means exhaustive but only illustrative.

62. 1201.

63. 1101.

64. Some writers on Poetics reduced all the *rasas* to one. Bhavabhūti in his *Uttararāmacarita* said that *karuṇa* is the only *rasa* and all the other

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śāntarasa is manifest expressed in the *Puram* poetry, though, as in the case of Bharata, Tolkāppiar does not mention *śānta* as a *rasa* at all.[65]

Śānta is the *rasa* of *Śama*. It is the tranquillity that is born of complete wisdom. In the *Puram* several sages serve as examples of this uncommon attitude of equanimity and peace. It is a condition of total awareness of the meaning and significance of the world and our life in it. It is perception in true perspective. The accompanying mood of this felicitous wisdom and vision of wholeness is a certain sweetness towards creation, a joy of living amidst the kindred souls. It is then that the world becomes a home of harmony, tender love and compassion. Whereas in a unregenerate love of men and women, there is a large element of tempestuous moods of joy and pain. In the supernal love of the sages there is only the calm and immovable serenity. There is no trace of an ego with its agitated expectations and depressing disappointments.

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rasas are only the various expressions (*vivarta*) of the same. *eko rasaḥ karuṇa eva nimittabhedāt.....śrayate vivartān.* Abhinavagupta thought that *śānta* is the only *rasa*. Bhoja found in *śṛṅgāra* and *abhimāna* such a fundamental *rasa*. Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin, Nārāyaṇa and Viśwanātha took *adbhuta* as basic.

65. *Mahābhārata* displays the *śāntarasa* according to Ānandavardhana. By and large, the events of *Mahābhārata* tend to make one believe that it is a saga of war, not of peace. If anything, it is the futility of war that is the outstanding lesson of that marathon epic. Yet its dominant *rasa* is said to be *śānta*. The events are only the way in which this bitter truth is driven home into the hearts of the listeners, according to Ānandavardhana. The *Śāntiparvan* is supposed for this reason to be the supreme fruit of the epic tree. *Mahābhārata* is described even as an *Upaniṣad* and an *Araṇyaka*. The chief result of *Mahābhārata* is release, according to Abhinavagupta. (*śāstraṁ sahasraśatasaṁmitam atra mokṣaḥ*). Even *Rāmāyaṇa*, according to Kṣemendra, is, in the ultimate analysis, a work aiming at *śānta*, notwithstanding Bhavabhūti's and Ānandavardhana's views. See Dr. V. Raghavan's *The Number of Rasas*, p. 45 and Prof. M. Hiriyanna's Foreword to it.

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The *uddipanavibhāva* for *śāntarasa* is the phenomenal character of the world. Penance and control of senses (தவம்) is superior to the worldly attachments. Peace is the end here.[66]

Śiva is the perfect model of peace and poise.[67] Persons who have taken upon themselves the life of detachment were revered.[68] Koccengat-colan was a saintly king who, it is said, built more than seventy temples. Śekkilār has immortalised him in his *Peria Purāṇam*. The Śaiva saints, Sundarar, Appar and Sambandhar have spoken about him in glowing terms. Similarly, Mudukudumi-pperuvaluti was a great and noble king. He is extolled as Kārināyanār in Sekkilar's hagiological work.

The great souls who were dynamic forces of social good were deeply calm inwardly. Their infinite capacity for social action was born from a central nucleus of tremendous silence.[69] The height of *śānta* is scaled in *Puram*[70] which is a classic statement of this stupendous calm and superb compassion. Death does not hold any terror for this poet-saint; nor does life have any treacherous traps to suck him in. He does not slip into doldrums in misfortune; nor does he go into bacchanalian rapture over fortunes. There is nothing that is alien and harmful. There are no pets and preferences. There is only a beatific vision of things as they are. There is no attempt at any judgment; there is no wilful choice. Perfect equanimity reigns supreme.

In Indian Poetics, Bharata and others have described the knowledge of truth as the *vibhāva* of *śānta*. According to Ānandavardhana, it is not so much the disgust with the

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66. *Puram*: 358.

67. *Ibid.*, 1.

68. *Ibid.*, 251–2.

69. *Ibid.*, 182.

70. *Ibid.*, 192. Perāśiriar describes it as:

செஞ்சாந் தெறியினும் செத்தினும் போழினும்
நெஞ்சோர்ந்தோடா நிலை.

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phenomenal world that is the *sthāyin* for *śānta*, as the blissful peace of the destruction of desire (*tṛṣṇākṣayasukha*).

The *Abhinavabhārati* holds that knowledge of truth and a disgust with the phenomenal together constitute the *sthāyin* for *śānta*. If it were mere disgust, it may end in misanthropic hate towards all. But *śānta* is a positive bliss of a *rasa*. Consequently, the world is an object, not of disgust, but of compassion. As in the case of a Bodhisattva, *prajñā* and *mahā-karuṇā* are two sides of the same wisdom. Bharata considers mere disgust with the world as inauspicious. When informed by wisdom, it becomes auspicious.

In the *Kuraḷ* also, the fundamental *rasa* seems to be only *śānta*. The values of *aṟam* and *poṟuḷ* are instrumental to peace and joy. His systematisation of the householder's life is an attempt to show, as in the case of *Tolkāppiam*, that a life of love is ultimately the means to peace. This is the significance of the expression of "வேண்டுதல் வேண்டாமை இலான்" (4), "இருவினையும் சேர" (5), etc.

The quiescence of the senses is the royal road to felicity. These are all comparable to *nirveda*. This is made more explicit in *Kuraḷ*.[71]

In Indian Poetics again, *Vira* is said to be of many varieties, two of them being *dānavīra* and *dayāvīra*. Some scholars go to the extent of saying that *dayāvīra* does the role of *śānta* and that, consequently, *śānta* need not be reckoned as the ninth *rasa* at all. Sometimes it is said that it is a synonym for *śānta* (*śāntasyaiva nāmāntarakaraṇam.*) The road to peace is a difficult ascent, strewn with dangers. Only an indomitable will can push ahead and register progress. Courage is necessary to quell the external enemies as much as to conquer the inner foes of passion and ignorance.

The great sages act in the world for the good of all. This is *dayāvīratva* according to Abhinava. *Dayā-vīra* and *dāna-vīra*,

71. 24, 25, 50, 241, 267, 269, 342. 352, 360, 369, 370.

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not to mention the *dharma-vira* and the *yuddha-vira*, are at every step found in the *Puram*. The entire book is so replete with them that it is unnecessary to instantiate them with specific illustrations. Pāri, Began, Kumaṇan, Atiyamān, Āy Antiran, the lady of the house who feeds the guest with the last few quantities of reserve grains that are intended to be seeds for next cultivation, the woman who when asked about the whereabouts of her son replies nonchalantly: "I do not know; my womb was merely the cave where once the tiger rested; that is all my bond with my son; you may find him, perhaps, in the warfront"[72] are all *viras* of one kind or other.

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72. *Puram*: 86:

"சிற்றி னற்றாண் பற்றி நின்மகன்
யாண்டு ளனோவென வினவுதி யென்மகன்
யாண்டு ளனாயினு மறியே னோரும்
புலிசேர்ந்து போகிய கல்லளை போல
ஈன்ற வயிறோ விதுவே
தோன்றுவன் மாதோ போர்க்களத்தானே.

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